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From the Polis to Facebook: Social Media and the Development of a New Greek Public Sphere

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From the Polis to Facebook: Social Media and the Development of a New Greek Public Sphere

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Dedication

Dedicated to my mother and father, for their love, help, and support.

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From the Polis to Facebook: Social Media and the Development of a New Greek Public Sphere

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Abstract: The objective of this research project is to critically examine how social and new media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and online radio have influenced the potential development or rejuvenation of public sphere, civil society, and public discourse in Greece during the years of the country's economic, political, and social crisis. The project attempts to answer how social and new media have impacted the public sphere and civil society, how social and new media have contributed to the formation of new political and social movements, how social and new media have contributed to the formation of alternative online news sources, and whether social and new media are considered to be more credible sources of news and information compared to mainstream media institutions. Greece was selected as the site for this research project in response to the prevailing view found in the body of academic literature that Greece's public sphere and civil society have historically been underdeveloped when compared to the countries of Western Europe and the United States. In addition, the political and economic upheaval which accompanied the Greek economic crisis and the country's location at the

intersection of Western and Eastern Europe and the Middle East, presented intriguing possibilities for research and for examining the role that new technologies can play in the redevelopment of the public sphere and civil society during a time of crisis. Interviews were conducted with over 120 individuals, including elected officials and political personnel, journalists, media professionals, bloggers, academics, opinion leaders, activists, and representatives of organizations active within civil society. Five illustrative examples of organizations with a prominent social media presence, including a non-governmental organization, a political party, a mainstream media corporation, an online news portal, and an alternative online radio station were examined. Electronic survey research was also performed across three sample populations, including Greece's representatives in the European Parliament, editors of major Greek newspapers, and representatives from organizations operating in the civil society sector. This dissertation is based on longitudinal, multi-year research performed in Greece between September 2012 and August 2017.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 – INTRODUCTION

The 2010s have been a turbulent decade on a worldwide scale. In recent years, the global community has witnessed a number of large-scale protest and activist movements, including the Arab Spring revolts in Egypt, Tunisia, and other countries of the Arab world; the Occupy Wall Street movement in the United States and in major financial centers throughout the world; the Taksim Square uprising in Turkey; the so-called "Green Movement" in Iran; and the protest movement of the "Indignados" all across Spain in 2011.

One of the primary attributes all of these movements share in common is the significant role played by new information and communication technologies (ICTs), particularly social and new media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogs, in their development and growth. Social and new media have played a preeminent role in the dissemination of news and information about these movements to participants and to the wider public at large, and have frequently allowed these movements to bypass traditional media gatekeepers and to portray themselves and deliver their message without the mediation of the mainstream media. Furthermore, social and new media tools have allowed for participants in these movements to communicate efficiently and instantaneously, coordinating their actions on the fly and transcending, in many instances, previously fixed boundaries of space and time.

While the aforementioned examples of protest and social movements, such as the "Indignados" of Spain and the Occupy Wall Street movement, have received a great deal more attention in the media (and by scholars), one of the most significant and widespread protest movements of this decade developed in Greece, where in the spring and summer of 2011,

hundreds of thousands of Greek citizens organized and protested in central squares and plazas throughout Greece, with the most prominent of these protests being organized in Syntagma (Constitution) Square in central Athens directly across the street from Greece's Parliament building on one end and Greece's Ministry of Finance on the other end. The movement of the Greek "Indignants," as they came to be known, mirroring the terminology used by the "Indignados" in Spain, occupied Syntagma Square and other prominent public spaces throughout Greece for two months, from late May to late July 2011, and were, by the standards of post-war Greece, unprecedented in their size and longevity (Pantazidou, 2013: 762; Panagiotopoulou, 2013: 422-424). The choice of Syntagma Square, across the street from Greece's seat of government and "ground zero" of economic decision-making, as the "heart" of this new movement, could not have been more symbolic in light of the severe economic crisis and contraction the country has experienced since 2008.

It is this monumental moment in modern Greek history which serves as the starting point for this study. Specifically, this research project will focus on Greece during the period of its economic, political, and social crisis, and the impact that social media and other forms of new online media have had on Greece's public sphere and civil society, including the influence of such mediums on the development of new social movements and forms of protest, new political parties, and on public discourse more broadly.

1.2 – GREECE TODAY

Greece, following the downfall of the military regime which governed the country between 1967 and 1974, has established a parliamentary democracy with a unicameral legislature, and where the head of government is the prime minister, while the head of state, the

country's president, holds a largely ceremonial role. While electoral politics in Greece are robust, with dozens of political parties participating in national, regional, local, and European elections, for most of the post-junta period (known as the "metapolitefsi," or Third Hellenic Republic) from 1974 until 2011), power alternated between two dominant parties: the center-left "PASOK" (Panhellenic Socialist Movement) and the center-right "Nea Dimokratia" (New Democracy) party, with one brief period in 1989 when New Democracy co-governed with the KKE, the Communist Party of Greece. Greece has been a member of the European Union (known originally as the European Community) since 1981, and a member of the Eurozone since 2002.

The time period between the fall of the military junta and the mid-2000s saw tremendous economic growth in Greece, perhaps best signified by Greece's hosting of the Summer Olympic Games in 2004. Beginning in 2008, however, Greece experienced a financial crisis of almost unprecedented scale. Greece's economic figures have reached depression-level proportions not seen in the West since the Great Depression, with the unemployment rate approaching 30 percent, gross domestic product reduced by approximately 25 percent, and sharp declines in the average income and standard of living of most Greek citizens. The crisis has been accompanied by the implementation of strict economic austerity measures which have included reductions in wages and pensions, cuts to social services, tax increases, and the imposition of capital controls limiting the amount of money which can be withdrawn by depositors at Greek banks.

A short background of political events that have taken place in Greece in the past decade will help the uninitiated reader understand the breath and depth of the country's economic and political crisis, and the major changes that have occurred in the country's political landscape. In October 2009, after a campaign in which voters were promised that Greece's finances were in

order[1], the U.S.-born Giorgos Papandreou, son and grandson of former prime ministers, was elected. Within months, and after Greece's deficit figures were allegedly altered and augmented, making Greece's deficit seem much worse than initially projected.[2] This set into motion the passage of a first round of strict economic austerity measures in May 2010, as conditions of the loans provided as a "bailout" to Greece by the "troika" of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Central Bank (ECB), and European Commission. In November 2011 in the midst of the deepening economic crisis and under pressure from the European Union and Greece's lenders, Papandreou's government was replaced, without elections being held, by a government led by technocrat Loucas Papademos and a cabinet consisting of representatives from PASOK, New Democracy, and LAOS (the Popular Orthodox Rally, a minor right-wing party). In early 2012, a "mid-term program" of new and highly unpopular austerity measures was approved by Parliament. In May 2012 this was followed by the fall of the Papademos government and the declaration of early parliamentary elections. These elections resulted in a tremendous shakeup of the electoral map and significant declines for Greece's previously dominant political parties as well as the increased electoral share of many smaller parties, most notably SYRIZA (the "Coalition of the Radical Left"). Nevertheless, no party could formulate a parliamentary majority or coalition, and follow-up elections were held in June 2012. Out of these new elections, a coalition government comprised of New Democracy (majority partner),

[1] See http://www.ekathimerini.com/215122/article/ekathimerini/news/former-pm-papandreou-stands-accused-of-making-false-pledges for more.

[2] Refer to interview with professor Zoe Georganta former board member of the Greek Statistical Authority (ELSTAT), aired on Dialogos Radio on May 10-16, 2017 and published at https://www.mintpressnews.com/whistleblower-greek-debt-crisis-manufactured-unscrupulous-accounting/228076/. Original audio available at http://dialogosmedia.org/?page_id=15. Additionally, refer to interview with Nicholas Logothetis, former ELSTAT board member, aired on Dialogos Radio on November 8-14, 2017 and published at https://www.mintpressnews.com/trials-andreas-georgiou-fraud-drove-greece-austerity/235102/. Original audio available at http://dialogosmedia.org/?page_id=15.

PASOK, and DIMAR (the "Democratic Left" party) was formulated. This government remained in office until December 2014, when it was dissolved after the Parliament's inability to elect a new president of the Hellenic Republic. Parliamentary elections held in January 2015 mirrored the results first seen in the European parliamentary elections of May 2014, bringing SYRIZA to power in a coalition government with the populist-right "Anexartitoi Ellines" (Independent Greeks), which first entered parliament in the May 2012 elections. In July 2015, a snap referendum held by the SYRIZA-led government overwhelmingly rejected a new austerity package demanded by the European Union. This result of the referendum was nevertheless ignored, as an arguably harsher austerity package was approved by the SYRIZA-led government in July and August of 2015. Nevertheless, snap parliamentary elections held in September 2015 brought the SYRIZA-Independent Greeks coalition back to power, amidst increasing electoral abstention.[3] In May 2017, a fourth set of strict austerity measures was placed before parliament by the SYRIZA-led government and ratified. Throughout this period, Greece's economic crisis continued unabated, with salaries and pensions sharply reduced, quality of life plummeting for most Greek citizens, a sharp rise in unemployment, and a large "brain wave" of Greeks emigrating out of the country.[4]

This same time period large-scale protest and social upheaval in Greece accompanied the broad changes in Greece's electoral landscape. Large protests followed the enactment of the initial package of austerity measures in 2010 as part of the loan package the Greek government agreed to with its lenders. The summer of 2011 saw the large-scale movement of the

[3] Greek election results dating back to 1996 can be found at http://ekloges.ypes.gr/.
[4] A wide range of sources exist detailing the Greek economic crisis in further detail, though it is difficult to find one all-encompassing source which provides a complete picture of the crisis and its impact on the country. A discussion of the economic indicators of the crisis is, however, outside the source of this dissertation.

"Indignants," centered in Syntagma Square in Athens and in major cities and town squares throughout the country. Further large protests accompanied the package of a second set of austerity proposals in February 2012, and the sudden shutdown of Greek national public broadcaster ERT in June 2013. Large demonstrations both for and against a new round of austerity proposals from Greece's European lenders occurred in the days leading up to the sudden July 2015 referendum on these very proposals. Since then, protest activity in Greece has been sporadic and ephemeral at best, while the economic crisis persists.

It could be argued that the severe economic downturn suffered by Greece is an extreme case of the financial difficulties and systemic failures experienced throughout much of the western world in the past decade. As stated by Purcell (2013: 7), the global economic recession is the culmination of political processes which began in the 1970s and 1980s when neoliberal doctrine triumphed in the West (via the election of such figures as Ronald Reagan in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom) and was imposed in the global south via foreign direct investment and undemocratic, unaccountable institutions such as the IMF. According to Purcell, the fall of the Berlin Wall further accelerated this neoliberalization process, with such policies attaining "common sense" status in the political sphere. It was only when the global economic recession began in 2007, following the financial crash which began in the United States, that the "neoliberal consensus" began to weaken (Ibid., 8). In response to this unprecedented financial crisis, the economic austerity approach which previously had been imposed by the world's wealthiest countries on the countries of the global south began to be implemented in countries of the northern hemisphere, making its way to Europe and in particular, to countries such as Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Italy, and Greece.

1.3 – FROM THE ANCIENT GREEK *POLIS* TO THE "POLIS 2.0"

Much has been written about the economic crisis in Greece and throughout much of the Western world in previous years. Notably though, the original Greek word "*krisis*," in both its ancient and modern definitions, contains within it a far more positive connotation, referring to a decision (in the judicial sense), and subjective opinion and criticism, or reflection (Siapera et al., 2015: 451). Following in this logic, in ancient Athens of the fifth century B.C., the citizenry—the "*demos*"—gradually was recognized as the sole legitimate ruling authority in society, from which the word "*demo-cracy*" was derived (Dahl, 1989: 14). The *demos* would then congregate to handle the management of public affairs for the greater good of the "*polis*," or what is commonly referred to as the city-state, but which largely denotes a specific form of social organization (Papacharissi, 2011: 28). Dahlgren (1995: 7) marks this period as the time where notions of the public space, or public sphere, were first conceived.

It is true, of course, that these spheres were open only to citizens, itself a rather exclusive and elitist category during the era in question (Ibid., 12). Nevertheless, these early conceptions of the *demos* and the *polis* set the standard for the future growth of democracy and development of democratic thought. Contogeorgis (2013: 199) points out that prior to the Greek Revolution and the birth of the modern Greek state in 1827, Greek society under Ottoman rule continued to be organized around the *polis*, or public, inherited from the Byzantine period. This *polis* was based on historic roots of democratic self-governance, in which the Greek community handled internal issues, even of a personal nature, in a communal fashion. Contogeorgis has described this form of societal organization as a "cosmosystem."

If what's old is new again, this is certainly the case with the concepts of the *polis* and the *demos*, which helped develop the modern-day conceptualization of the public sphere and the related concept of civil society. The same, however, could also be said about new forms of communication and their democratizing or revolutionary potential. As Castells (1996: 30-31) points out, the characterization of the current information technology "revolution" as a phenomenon that is indeed revolutionary, parallels the lofty claims that were made during previous technological revolutions. It is therefore no surprise to see modern-day technological parallels made to the ancient Greek *polis*. Papacharissi (2011: 94) refers to the development of the modern-day virtual (online) sphere of digital communication as a "*mediapolis*," one that is not grounded in a specific location but exists virtually and the site where contemporary civic activity unfolds. These global networks converge to form what Papacharissi terms a "global networked polis" (Ibid., 98), which I would further characterize as the "*polis 2.0*," as a result of the preeminent role of interactive, digital web 2.0 technologies in this *mediapolis*.

1.4 – WHY GREECE? JUSTIFYING COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

The protest movement of the "Indignants" in Syntagma Square and in public spaces throughout Greece is said to have developed following a Facebook invitation which went "viral," calling upon the populace to peacefully congregate at Syntagma Square and other centrally-located public spaces throughout Greece, following in the example of the Spanish "Indignados" who had launched their movement just a few days prior (Giovanopoulos, 2011b: 42). Notably, though, this is not the only instance where social and new media outlets have played a prominent role in shaping social and political developments in Greece. From the middle of the previous decade, news blogs became a prominent alternative source of news and information for many

Greek online users, while a series of demonstrations and protests, such as the massive uprising which followed the shooting death of a 15-year-old high school student at the hands of a police officer in December 2008, and the protests following the sudden and unprecedented shutdown of Greek national public broadcaster ERT by the then-government in June 2013, have prominently involved the usage of social and new media tools.

It is this phenomenon that I investigate in this research project. Specifically, the aim of this research is to examine social and new media outlets, such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and other tools and applications (such as online radio), and the contribution of these outlets towards the development of a new Greek public sphere (or spheres), the formation of new spaces of public discourse in Greek society, and the possible rejuvenation of the public sphere and civil society in Greece during a period of intense economic, political, and social crisis.

The public sphere and civil society, which will be discussed in upcoming sections of this paper, were not selected by accident. The prevailing view found in the existing academic literature on these two concepts adopts the position that the public sphere in Greece never had developed fully independently of the state, successive governments, or the partisan system (Komninou, 2001: 37). Similarly, the established view in the existing literature holds that Greek civil society is atrophic, never having developed fully as a result of the clientelism and patronage which has been ubiquitous all throughout Greece's modern history (Kavoulakos & Gritzas, 2015: 338-339). The point of view commonly found in the existing literature holds that partisan-based clientelism and a Greek form of this phenomenon, "diaploki," are highly prevalent in Greece, more so than in most other Western societies. Therefore, the extent to which this is still the case, or the degree to which social and new media may have helped influence societal changes which

have led to the development of a new public sphere (or spheres) independent of the clientelist system, and the possible reinvigoration or redevelopment of Greek civil society, are main areas of inquiry of this research project. With the usage of social media and new media, and the internet more broadly, having significantly increased in Greece in recent years, in spite of the crisis, and in light of the prominent role that such technologies have played in social and protest movements during this period, it is useful to examine the impact of these technologies on the public sphere and civil society in Greece.

In addition to theories of the public sphere and conceptualizations of civil society, this research will also be based in part on concepts and theorizations of alternative, radical, community, and citizen's media and of new social movements and the role of technology in these movements. For instance, Greece can serve as a comparison case with other countries which experienced widespread social and protest movements in the past decade, including Spain (with the "Indignados" movement), the United States ("Occupy Wall Street"), several Middle Eastern countries which experienced the "Arab Spring," and countries which have experienced social media-inspired "color revolutions," such as the Ukraine.

Furthermore, the existing mainstream media environment in Greece is studied to determine to what extent social and new media have differentiated themselves from the major media outlets, or alternately, have reproduced dominant media narratives. This is significant, as Greece's media system has developed in a different manner from the media systems in most of the Western world and has itself been subject to the consequences of the prevalent patron-client system. Theoretical research on European media systems, and in particular those of Southern Europe and specifically focusing on Greece, will inform this analysis, providing the necessary

context which will permit examination of social and new media and the ways in which such outlets may signify a break with tradition and differentiate themselves from the mainstream media (television, radio, and the press) of Greece.

But why Greece? What is it about the country *itself* that makes it worthy of a scholarly examination of the aforementioned topics? There are several reasons. The atrophic development of the Greek public sphere and Greek civil society, as mentioned earlier, and the potentially high degree of clientelism and partisanship, differentiate Greece from most other European and Western countries, which might be said to have more fully developed public spheres and civil societies. This relates to another reason: culture, and specifically, the unique case of Greece. As described by Vatikiotis (1974: 11):

> Greece is a European country but it comprises a society that in perceptions, values, and social and cultural attitudes remains essentially near Eastern and Ottoman. Yet it is not Muslim or Turkish. Nor is it Western… it is a Balkan country but not Slavic…

Certainly much has changed in Greece since 1974. At the time, Greece was emerging from the seven-year rule of an autocratic military dictatorship and was still seven years away from becoming a member of the European Community (today's European Union). Greece witnessed rapid economic development from the 1980s until the 2000s and the onset of the economic crisis, and a tremendous process of modernization and indeed westernization. Yet today, it remains sharply differentiated in many ways from its Northern and Western European counterparts, while sharing more in common with other Southern European democracies such as Italy and Spain (as will be seen in the discussion on southern European media systems and the Greek case). Greece is located at the cultural and political boundaries of Europe (Clarke et al., 2015: 1), a country with little relation to its neighboring Balkan states (Giagkoglou, 2014: 470). At the same time,

Greece can also be said, as a European country, to be culturally distinct from the countries of the Middle East and the Arab world, including Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, and Turkey, which saw the rise of the "Arab Spring" in the period between 2009 and 2013. Greece is in a category of its own, meriting further study. As stated by Alexandros Baltzis (personal communication, February 23, 2013), an assistant professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Media Studies at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece is:

> ... a good laboratory to see the role of social media in such circumstances…we have seen that in the Arab countries, we have seen it in some occasions in Western European countries as well, but we have not seen it yet in the Balkans, except for the case of [Alexandros] Grigoropoulos (referring to the shooting death of a 15-year-old teenager in Athens, sparking major riots in Greece in December 2008).

Greece's mainstream media landscape also differs significantly in a multitude of ways, when compared to the media landscape of most Western European or North American countries. Described by Hallin and Mancini (2004) as a "Polarized Pluralist Model" or "Mediterranean Model," the Greek media landscape is marked by the predominance of television, a weak press, a large amount of outlets compared to the size of the media marketplace, and strong interplay between media owners, who also possess significant holdings in other sectors of the Greek economy, and politicians and political parties on the other hand.

Another reason why the Greek case is worthy of further research is the fact that the country remains underrepresented and under-researched in the existing academic literature across a wide range of topic areas, including media studies, social movements, and the usage of social media. There is a general lack of research of Greek and southern European media systems (Papathanassopoulos, 2004: 158), and notably the only complete English-language academic volume on any topic relating to the Greek media landscape was published in 1993 (Zaharopoulos

& Paraschos, 1993). Furthermore, there is also a recognized lack of research on the relationship between the crisis in Greece and the media in terms of how the Greek media may have helped create conditions that allowed the crisis to develop and also in terms of the coverage by these same outlets (Pleios, 2013: 15-17). In addition, a lack of research on specific mediums, such as television in Greece, has been identified (Leventakos, 2004: 5).

The Greek social media realm is another area which is said to be underrepresented in the existing body of academic research. This includes a lack of studies on Twitter usage in Greece in any form (Galani, 2013: 47), as well as a dearth of studies on the Greek political blogosphere or Greek news blogs (Touri and Kostarella, 2016: 7; Zafiropoulos, 2012: 722). The development of civil society in Southern Europe is another field of study that has been identified as being under-researched (Huliaras, 2015: 16), as is research on clientelism and its relationship to the media in Greece (Papathanassopoulos, 2004: 145, 154). Moreover, research focusing on the full range of solidarity initiatives in Greece is also underrepresented (Vathakou, 2015: 168), as is research on online political participation (Theocharis, 2011: 208). Aspects of Greek protest movements themselves are also underrepresented in the body of existing research, including a lack of studies specifically about the "Indignants" movement in 2011 (Filippopoulos, 2013: 6) or specifically about the social and new media aspects of this movement (Chrisanthakopoulou, 2013: 113; Filippopoulos, 2013: 105). Even works by preeminent scholars such as Castells (2012), while having focused on the protest movements in countries such as Spain, Egypt, Tunisia, and Iceland, in addition to the Occupy Wall Street movement, have made only cursory references to the protests of 2011 in Greece (see also Purcell, 2013). This is despite the fact that the "Indignants" movement of Greece has been identified as a unique case when compared to the Occupy Wall

Street movement or the protests in Spain due to the fact that a concrete set of policy proposals, the "Midterm Economic Program," containing a barrage of new economic austerity measures and cuts was being debated by the Greek parliament during the same period that the "Indignants" were protesting outside its doors (Sotirakopoulos & Sotiropoulos, 2013: 448). This overall lack of research on the Greek case from many standpoints, ranging from social and new media to social and protest movements, is another reason why the Greek case warrants further attention.

An additional characteristic which made Greece worthy of further study is the fact that, despite rapid growth in recent years, the country remains in the lowest ranks of the EU-28 member-states in terms of the percentage of households and businesses which possess internet access, as well as the percentage of its population which use the internet on a daily basis as opposed to a less frequent basis. Therefore, examining the influence and impact of online (social and new media) tools in a national context where internet usage remains, to an extent, more limited than other Western societies, adds another dimension that is worthy of further research and examination (Eurostat, 2016; Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2016).

Greece can also provide insights as to how social and new media may impact public discourse in a country experiencing a severe and protracted economic crisis—some would say depression—and in a societal context where there are low levels of trust in major national institutions and in the mass media and where there is, at the very least, a perception that the public sphere and civil society have developed in a less than robust fashion and where clientelism, corruption, and the phenomenon of "diaploki" are highly prevalent.

Ultimately though, this study is also important for what answers it can provide in a broader context, relevant both to Greece and other societies. How effective can social and new

media be in enabling a society to overcome issues of clientelism and entrenched barriers to entry in the media landscape? Can issues such as the prevalent interplay of media, business, and political/state forces—known in Greece as "diaploki"—be overcome, or is the existing media order ultimately replicated as a new, online form of "diaploki"? Is a new public sphere created or is the existing public sphere rejuvenated and expanded, and to what extent are such new spaces of public discourse free of the pathologies of the incumbent official sphere? Can genuine alternatives to existing mainstream media develop and flourish, or will such new outlets ultimately be captured and co-opted by the hegemonic media system? Is there room for civil society to expand and develop, and how can social and new media help enact such development? Finally, to what extent will a potentially new or rejuvenated public sphere and civil society, and new alternative media and civil society institutions, attain longevity or remain ephemeral?

It bears noting here that I am not a dispassionate observer vis-à-vis Greece and the country's media landscape and political, economic, social, and cultural environment. Since 2010, I have covered the ongoing Greek economic crisis and its many political, social, and cultural derivatives as a journalist, via the production of a weekly radio program, Dialogos Radio. Through this program, I have had the opportunity—and indeed the obligation—to maintain a daily connection with the pulse of Greek society and developments within the country. Furthermore, I have had the opportunity to perform several hundred interviews with notable personalities—both Greek and non-Greek and from both within and outside of Greece—on a wide range of topics pertaining to the economy, political developments, social and activist issues, and cultural production during a time of crisis. These interviews represented a wide swath of ideological backgrounds and positions, and enabled me to develop a stronger understanding of

the nature of public discourse in Greece during this period of time. In addition, some of the individuals who were interviewed later were incorporated into this study as interview subjects, or served as useful native contacts and informants.

My work with Dialogos Radio has been accompanied by work in print and online journalism, which has included the republication of many of the interviews that were initially broadcast, as well as the publishing of a number of journalistic articles and analyses on the Greek case, often based on my own knowledge of the country and culture and my experiences on the ground in Greece. These articles have been published since 2011 in such outlets as *Hellenic Insider*, *Mint Press News*, *Truthout*, *The Daily Kos*, *The Huffington Post*, and *The Daily* Texan, in addition to Greece's *Hot Doc Magazine*, *freepen.gr* and *toperiodiko.gr*.

Moreover, my interest in Greece has broadly expanded to its media landscape, which has been the subject of a published book chapter on Greek radio from a regulatory, financial, and programmatic perspective (Nevradakis, 2012), a published academic paper on Greek satellite television and its role in maintenance of cultural ties and an "imagined community" in the Greek diasporic community of New York City—where this author was born and raised—published in 2011, and, since 1997, through the administration and maintenance of a website, *www.media.net.gr*, which serves as an online catalog of Greek broadcast media in Greece, Cyprus, and worldwide, in addition to providing a live feed of news relating to Greek media.

Finally, growing up in a Greek immigrant household in a heavily Greek community of New York City (Astoria, Queens) allowed me to develop a significant degree of cultural capital, including native-level fluency in the Greek language, which resulted in my certification as a native Greek speaker by the Greek Ministry of Education via examination in 2010. This cultural

fluency was bolstered by regular visits to Greece with my family, experience as a volunteer at the Athens 2004 Summer Olympics, experience conducting research on the ground in Greece in the spring and summer of 2010 for my aforementioned book chapter on the Greek radio landscape, and a 2011 visit to Greece for the purpose of conducting pilot interviews for this research project and developing local contacts. This latter visit exposed me to the "Indignants" protest movement, which I also had the opportunity to cover as a journalist. However, my stay in Greece for the purposes of this dissertation project was my first experience residing in the country for an extended period of time.

1.5 – Research Questions and Objectives

The objective of this research project is to critically examine the role that social and new media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and online radio have played in Greece's political, social, and civil society discourses during the country's financial crisis. It focuses specifically on the time period between 2011 (the year of the large-scale protests of the "Indignants") and August 2017, following over two full years of Greece's SYRIZA-led coalition government and as the economic crisis in the country continued to persist. The public sphere, civil society, and social and new media provide the conceptual foundations of this study. Specifically, social and new media will be examined with regard to their role in the potential rejuvenation of both the Greek public sphere and Greek civil society and their impact and potential differentiation from Greece's mainstream media institutions. The manner in which social and new media have been utilized in Greece by individuals and organizations (including political parties, civil society initiatives, and alternative media outlets) and their potential contributions to political or social

change, such as the formation of social or protest movements, the establishment of new political movements, or changes in political behavior is a special concern.

This project will be based on longitudinal, multi-year research that I have performed on the ground in Greece between September 2012 and August 2017, focusing on the time period between May 2011 (when the protest movement of the "Indignants" was launched) and August 2017. Conceptually, this study will focus on the Greek public sphere and Greek civil society. These concepts have been selected in response to the prevailing literature on Greece, which in large part suggests that the Greek public sphere and Greek civil society have historically not developed as fully as in the countries of Western and Northern Europe, and North America. While these two concepts will be defined and examined in more detail in the literature review, the "public sphere" conceptually refers to institutions such as political parties and mainstream media institutions, while "civil society" conceptually refers to the "third sector" which includes, for example, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and volunteerism. These two concepts will then be tied in to the accompanying concepts of "clientelism" and "diaploki," which will also be further defined in the literature review. The "public sphere" and "civil society" can then be operationalized, for example, in terms of the number of voices participating in public discourse or the number of grassroots organization or volunteer initiatives that are in operation, and the potential role of social and new media in helping to deliver this change.

To accomplish this, the following methodological tools are employed: interviews with individuals who have some relation to social and new media in Greece and the Greek public sphere or Greek civil society (including journalists and media professionals, bloggers, opinion leaders, academics, politicians, and activists), five illustrative examples of focus organizations (a

political party, a non-governmental organization, and three distinct media outlets, with interviews from multiple representatives of each entity), survey research (conducted across three sample populations, including politicians, journalists, and civil society representatives), and historical-descriptive research of relevant phenomena, including the rise of blogging in Greece and the development and operation of the Greek mainstream media.

The analysis will be foregrounded in a theoretical backdrop which includes literature on the public sphere, civil society, clientelism and institutional credibility, social movements, social media, alternative media, and mass media in the Greek and Southern European context, to be presented in the literature review in chapter 2. This broad literature review will also help us understand and navigate how these various threads are connected, and what are the multiple potential obstacles—such as corruption, clientelism, patronage, and institutional or regulatory factors—which may exist and which may stymie a broader development and flourishing of the public sphere, civil society, public discourse, social and political movements, and alternative media, while impacting the credibility of incumbent societal institutions, including the mainstream press and mass media..

The following central research questions and subquestions will guide this project:

RQ1*: How have social and new media challenged clientelism and diaploki in Greece via contributing to the expansion or rejuvenation of the public sphere and civil society in Greece during the years of the economic crisis?*

RQ2*: How do public institutions, as well as civil society, citizen, and activist organizations and movements employ social media to engage with the public, to spread their message and to organize political or social movements?*

> ***SQ1****: How have social and new media contributed to political change, changes in political behavior, or the formation of new political movements in Greece during the crisis?*

***SQ2**: How have social and new media been used towards the formation of social movements and protest movements in Greece during the crisis?*

***RQ3**: Do social and new media differentiate themselves from the mainstream media in Greece, and if so, how?*

***SQ3**: How have social and new media contributed to the formation and development of alternative or community-oriented media outlets in Greece?*

***SQ4**: Are social and new media in Greece considered to be more credible sources of news and information compared to traditional, mainstream media institutions?*

These research questions closely relate to each other, and collectively they cover all of the conceptual areas which are being utilized in this research, including the public sphere and civil society, social and new media, and alternative and community media. The guiding concept behind these research questions is to specifically examine the impact of social and new media on Greece's social and political institutions (including the public sphere, civil society, political parties, and the mass media), while also investigating the extent to which social and new media have fostered the creation of the (previously lacking) alternative, radical, or community-oriented media sector or have ended up replicating the incumbent, hegemonic media system and associated "diaploki." Additionally, the extent to which societal institutions themselves (including political parties, the mass media, and civil society organizations) have engaged with social and new media tools will also be examined. Finally, because this research project has spanned several years during which the economic, political, and social crisis in Greece has continued and arguably deepened, one of the research questions that the project will attempt to address is what, if anything, has changed during this time and whether the influence and prevalence of social and new media tools have increased within this period.

Overall, the "master narrative" of this dissertation aims to examine the role and ability of social and new media to help a society overcome barriers—institutional and otherwise. Such

barriers may prevent broader participation in public discourse, the public sphere, and civil society, via the broadening of the space of public deliberation, development of a rejuvenated or new public sphere (or spheres) and new civil society organizations, and the development of new alternative media outlets. Furthermore, the extent to which this "new" public sphere and these new societal institutions may be free of previously-existing pathologies or the possibility that they may, in turn, be co-opted or "captured" by the existing hegemonic system will be examined. Continuing along this theoretical thread, this dissertation will probe to what extent a new public sphere, or multiple or subaltern public spheres, may develop, reflecting a later Habermasian notions of communicative action, a radical democratic framework, the "lifeworld" and potential development of a "plebian" public sphere, as well as a Gramscian notion of a civil society that is a space of contestation via a "war of position" between the hegemonic state apparatus and groups and individuals from below, including "organic intellectuals." In addition, the extent to which a pre-existing media framework (such as Greece's "Polarized Pluralist" or "Mediterranean" model) and a culture of "diaploki" ultimately is or is not replicated in this new online space, and the extent to which this new space is permanent or ephemeral and remains distinct or is co-opted and absorbed by the existing order, will be investigated. Will a potential "Polis 2.0" lead to what could be described as "diaploki 2.0," and to what extent can the Greek case contribute to a wider understanding of how social media might impact public discourse in a non-Greek context?

Looking ahead, in chapter 2, the review of the relevant literature, the theoretical backdrop of this research as described previously, and the topic areas which this project will focus will be presented. Chapter 3 will present the methodological approach employed in this study. In chapter 4, the Greek media landscape, Greek blogosphere, and pre-crisis protest movements will be

introduced, providing important contextual information on the media landscape in Greece at present and in the years leading up to the economic crisis, as well as societal changes and movements in the immediate pre-crisis period which set the stage for events and developments which followed. Chapter 5 will focus on social and new media and their impact on the Greek public sphere and Greek civil society. In chapter 6 examine social and new media's influence on political and social movements in Greece will be analyzed. Chapter 7 will look at social and new media and their impact on Greece's media landscape. Finally, chapter 8 will analyze the findings and conclusions of this research project, including the theoretical implications and broader applicability of the findings of this study to our understanding of the public sphere, civil society, alternative media, and social movements.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 – INTRODUCTION

The literature review will cover a wide range and scope of conceptual and theoretical areas. These conceptual and theoretical areas will include the public sphere; civil society; literature pertaining to institutional credibility in Greece; literature pertaining to the Greek mainstream media landscape; research on alternatives to mainstream media (alternative, community and radical media theory, literature on social and new media); and research about social movements and protests. In addition to examining some of the most significant literature which exists in each of the aforementioned categories from a global context, the literature review will also analyze in detail the body of research within these topic areas that pertains specifically to Greece, as well as the gaps in the existing literature which this research project will address.

There are several reasons why such a broad range of prior literature is being examined for the purposes of this research project:

- To define the concepts of the "public sphere" and "civil society" and to present the prevailing review in the existing literature, with regard to the development of these two concepts in the Greek context.
- To examine institutional credibility in Greece and the factors which may contribute to the lack of a robust public sphere and civil society. The associated concepts of "pluralism" and "diaploki" will also be defined.
- To examine the existing literature on the Greek media landscape, in order to ascertain how the operation and development of Greece's media has been viewed and defined by scholars.

- To analyze how social movements and protests in Greece have been studied and presented in prior scholarship, gaining a sense of the history of such movements in Greece, providing a framework for looking at social movements and protests in contemporary Greece, and connecting present-day movements to broader scholarship on social movements on a global scale.
- To examine alternatives to mainstream media, to define the concept of "alternative media," and to examine literature on social media and new media, including blogs, as potential alternatives to mainstream media.
- To ascertain gaps in the existing body of research and the extent to which there exists or doesn't exist research in all of the above areas, in relation to Greece.

As mentioned previously, the public sphere and civil society comprise two discrete, separate, but related categories of study for this research project. The public sphere is viewed as the sphere of political and social discourse, at both the individual level (citizens) and the institutional level (comprising such institutions as political parties and media outlets). In turn, civil society is viewed for the purposes of this study as the "third sector" which straddles the boundary between the public and private sectors, encompassing NGOs, citizens' and social movements, and volunteer initiatives. There is certainly some overlap between the public sphere and civil society—for instance, social movements can be said to very much be a part of the public sphere, though a distinction can be made here between discourse and dialogue which may relate to a social media or influence it in some way (which can be viewed as being more distinctly a part of the "public sphere" realm), and the actual operations of this movement or entity (which could be argued to be more distinctly part of the "civil society" realm). In turn,

academia is institutionally part of the public sphere with regard to its role in the exchange and dissemination of knowledge and ideas, but can also be viewed as an institution of civil society that is not distinctly a part of the public sector or the private sector. For the purposes of this research project, "public sphere" and "civil society" relate to two separate, but related, categories, with separate bodies of theory and literature. The table below illustrates the components of the public sphere and civil society, and the defining characteristics of both in the Greek case, leading up to the start of the Greek economic crisis in 2009-2010.

Table 1: Comparison of the Public Sphere and Civil Society:

Public Sphere		**Civil Society**	
What comprises it?	**What were its characteristics?**	**What comprises it?**	**What were its characteristics?**
• The government and state • Political parties and movements • Public institutions (courts, legislative bodies, schools and universities) • Mass media (television, radio, the press, online media) • Other public spaces where discussion and deliberation can occur (cafés, public squares, markets, etc.)	• Low levels of institutional trust • High degree of clientelism • High level of "diaploki" (intertwined and corrupt relationships between the government, political parties, and business interests) • High degree of political patronage • Lack of diversity of voices participating in public sphere	• NGOs (non-governmental organizations) • Trade unions and professional organizations • Grassroots, activist, citizens' and social movements • Volunteer groups • Community and neighborhood organizations • Academia • Consumer groups • Private voluntary organizations • Religious groups • Foundations	• Low levels of participation • Low levels of trust • Low levels of volunteerism • Lack of awareness of their existence and activities • Political patronage and ties to political parties and movements, the government, and the state • Corruption

The public sphere and civil society will be further examined and defined in the subsections which follow. However, the literature review will begin with an examination of institutional credibility in Greece and will introduce the concepts of clientelism and "diaploki," as well as their relevance to the Greek case. The background information and literature on institutional credibility in Greece will then help guide further discussion and analysis of the Greek public sphere and Greek civil society.

2.2 – Institutional Credibility, Clientelism, and Diaploki

This subsection will begin with a review of institutional credibility in Greece, present-day indicators, and potential factors affecting it. In subsequent subsections, the idea of clientelism will be defined and explored, and the relevant literature on the Greek case will be reviewed. Finally, the Greek phenomenon of "diaploki" will be defined and relevant literature analyzed.

2.2.1 – Institutional Credibility

A key factor when examining the public sphere, civil society, politics, and the media in Greece, particularly during the economic crisis, is institutional credibility. This category hovers over many other related categories (public sphere, civil society, the Greek media system, social movements, etc.) in Greece, and encompasses both domestic and global components. As the literature on institutional credibility and clientelism on Greece in particular will demonstrate, a perceived lack of a strong public sphere and strong civil society are related to a perceived lack of credibility of national institutions, such as the state, the government, political parties, and the mass media. Social and new media, in potentially rejuvenating the public sphere and civil society in Greece, might foster conditions which encourage reform, improvement, or the increased transparency of these institutions and could also potentially allow citizens to bypass institutional

structures which are considered corrupt or untrustworthy. This subsection will examine relevant Greek and global literature on institutional credibility and factors which may diminish it, as well as literature and research on clientelism, its relevance to the case of Greece, its potential impact on the Greek public sphere and Greek civil society, and the Greek phenomenon of "diaploki."

Blumler and Gurevitch highlighted the ways in which traditional systems of political communication in the West are being destabilized by societal changes. These factors include increased social and cultural heterogeneity, the massive growth in media outlets and generals and the erosion of the distinction between journalism and entertainment, the increased number of political "professionals" and spin doctors, the weakening of national borders, and increasing cynicism and apathy among citizens (2000: 155-172). These views are mirrored by Purcell, who identifies the growth of neoliberalism and its "taken-for-grantedness" as factors which led to the global recession of 2007 (2013: 4-8). The neoliberal response which followed, particularly in the crisis-hit countries of Europe, including Greece, delegitimized the political and economic system still further and fueled protest and opposition to the austerity measures being imposed by the "Troika" (European Commission, European Central Bank, and the IMF) (Ibid., 8-9). Purcell argues that today, democracy has been almost completely absorbed by the liberal-democratic state which has formed an alliance with neoliberal capital (Ibid., 29). This development has fostered experiments with "autogestation" and self-rule, as seen in the social movements in Spain, Greece, the Arab world, and elsewhere, which have attempted to operate based upon the principles of "direct democracy" or "true democracy" (Ibid., 116-117).

Continuing this line of thinking, Mann uses the examples of the Greek and Spanish protests of 2011 and the protests outside the state capitol in Madison, Wisconsin during that

period, as examples which suggest a common response to current trends in global capitalism. This response includes the deep alienation of workers from traditional center-left parties and labor organizations who have lent their support to the austerity policies being implemented, and new forms of collective action (2012: 182). In the Greek context, Mann highlights the currently active "I Don't Pay" movement and its direct actions of mass civil disobedience, including not paying for public services such as subway fares and highway tolls, in protest of poor public services and the austerity measures being imposed on society (Ibid., 189).

Looking at the Greek case, a useful starting point is a recent survey performed by the major Greek polling firm Kapa Research on behalf of the *To Vima* newspaper. This survey, conducted with a sample of 800 individuals nationwide on October 25-26, 2016, found very low levels of trust in most societal institutions, with sharp declines almost entirely across the board as compared to the same survey conducted in 2003. While the military was ranked as the most trusted national institution at 53.5 percent, this represented at 13.5 percent decline from 2003. Private businesses were the second most trusted institution, and the only one for which trust *increased* compared to 2003, rising by 18.5 percent during this period. Levels of trust were very low for the justice system (36 percent, decline of 20.5 percent since 2003), local government (21.5 percent, decline of 44 percent since 2003), the national Parliament (12.5 percent, decline of 32.5 percent since 2003), the national government (11.5 percent, decline of 26.5% since 2003), and political parties (4.5 percent, decline of 44 percent since 2003) (Kapa Research, 2016: 6).

Furthermore, in the Kapa Research study, even lower levels of trust were detected amongst respondents who stated that they would not vote or probably would not vote in the next national elections, as compared to those who stated that they would vote or probably would vote.

Only 2 percent of probable non-voters trusted the national government and parliament (compared to 15.5 and 17 percent for probable voters), 3 percent trusted trade unions (versus to 6.5 percent of likely voters), 13 percent trusted local government (as compared to 25 percent of likely voters), and 18.5 percent trusted the justice system (versus 43.5 percent of probable voters) (Ibid., 7). Among those who stated that they will not or likely will not vote in the next national electoral contest, 58 percent cited as a determining factor a feeling that their beliefs were not reflected by any political party, 40 percent cited corruption in public life as a determinant, 35.5 percent did not feel that they were represented by current political leaders, 24.5 percent stated that they would not vote as a protest against the economic austerity measures and memorandum agreements that have been ratified, and 15 percent stated, as a determining factor in their likelihood not to vote, that the political parties are too similar to each other (Ibid., 5).

Similarly low levels of institutional credibility can be ascertained from the results of Gallup International's end-of-year survey for 2014. Out of a nationwide sample of 1,000 respondents, 62 percent did not consider elections in Greece to be free and fair, and 73 percent fully or somewhat disagreed with the statement "Greece is ruled by the will of the people." In addition, 58 percent of respondents stated they distrusted judges, 91 percent distrusted politicians, 95 percent distrusted journalists, 74 percent distrusted businesspeople, 51 percent distrusted the police, 88 percent distrusted bankers, and 72 percent distrusted religious leaders, while the military enjoyed the trust of 55 percent of respondents (Gallup International, 2015).

Similar results were also shown in the "Government at a Glance 2017" factsheet for Greece, prepared by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). According to the OECD's figures, merely 13 percent of Greek citizens expressed confidence in

the national government, compared to an OECD average of 42 percent. Confidence in the judicial system was measured at 42 percent (compared to an average of 55 percent), and was at 44 percent for the education system (versus an OECD average of 67 percent), and 69 percent for the police (compared to 77 percent, on average, in the OECD). Just 26.0 percent of citizens used online e-government applications to file paperwork with public authorities via their websites in 2016, compared to a 35.6 percent average across OECD member-states (2017: 1-4).

Providing further insights specifically into the opinions and perceptions of Greece's youth was a survey conducted by the "DiaNEOsis" think tank in conjunction with polling firm MRB between September and November 2016. The nationwide sample consisted of 1,538 young adults aged 18-35, as well as 500 parental figures of these young adults. The results generally showed low levels of institutional trust amongst the youth—lower than among their parents. For example, 75.5 percent of youth responded that they somewhat or fully disagreed with the statement "the political system provides the opportunity to individuals like myself to have a say in the government's actions," while only 10.3 percent of youth respondents stated that they agreed with the statement "politicians care about what people like me think about." These percentages tended to decline as the educational level of respondents increased. When asked to rank their level of trust in the following societal institutions, with 0 representing total distrust and 10 representing full trustworthiness, the Greek parliament earned a ranking of 1.6 (2.3 among parents), the political system earned a 1.1 (1.5 from parents), the mass media was ranked at 1.7 (3.1 among parents), the police were ranked at 4.1 (6.0 among parents), the justice system earned a 3.8 ranking (5.1 among parents), the European Union was ranked 2.7 (3.5 among parents), while the church earned a ranking of 2.9 (5.1 among parents). Only 18.9 percent of youth polled

stated that they reached out to an elected or government official (as did 21.0 percent of parents), 6.5 percent stated that they worked for a political party or movement (as opposed to 2.6 percent of parents polled), while a mere 10.2 percent provided monetary donations to a political cause or movement (compared with 4.2 percent of parents polled) (2017: 11, 30, 43, 50).

From a scholarly perspective, Contogeorgis extensively references issues pertaining to the credibility of the Greek state and the domestic political system. Writing that it operates as an "oligarchic gang" which excludes society, he describes the system as an "elected monarchy" (2013: 58-59, 246) and "partyocracy" (2012: 55). He writes, for instance, that Greek civil society was not consulted with the austerity (memorandum) agreements agreed to by successive governments, which Contogeorgis argues are delegitimized as a result (2013: 124). The rapid electoral rise of the far-right Golden Dawn party serves as a further example of the credibility crisis and the reactions of the Greek citizenry, as ordinary citizens felt they tried all other options, including protesting on the streets, in other to improve the political system (Ibid.: 162). Meanwhile, the political rhetoric of all of the political parties is, according to Contogeorgis, identical, further fueling the credibility crisis (2012: 57). Instead of change, politicians have attempted to shift blame onto the populace through public statements such as "we ate it all together," increasing voter disgust still further (Ibid., 65-66). A final factor which Contogeorgis highlights is the parliamentary immunity law and system of parliamentary "self-investigation" for alleged wrongdoings, which he states is unparalleled elsewhere in the world and which has insulated Greece's political class from any accountability for its actions (Ibid., 58-59). Together, these factors help explain the low levels of institutional credibility observed in Greece, while this

lack of credibility may lead people to seek out new or alternative political movements, social causes, and sources of news and information.

Danopoulos continues Contogeorgis' line of thinking, writing that despite the appearance of many and varied vehicles for combating corruption and increasing accountability and transparency, the accountability of the Greek state remains at a low level compared to the countries of Western Europe and even some former Warsaw Pact countries (2015: 112). He highlights the lack of effective penalties for politicians who violated the law and the tremendous level of immunity afforded to government ministers and members of parliament, a level of protection which all parliamentary political parties wholeheartedly support (Ibid., 117, 121). These factors combine to foster an environment where the citizenry lacks any faith in the accountability of the political system. This last point is highlighted by Jones et al., who point out that while prior to the crisis (2008), the Greek public maintained the highest level of institutional trust in the EU, this has been reversed following the onset of the crisis, with a sharp decline in institutional trust towards both the national Parliament and EU institutions. Conversely, social trust, which pre-2008 was ranked lowest in the EU, has demonstrated an upward trend over the past decade (2015: 33-34). This result indicates a potential rejuvenation of the Greek civil society and efforts on the part of the populace to form new institutions and movements.

The decline in faith in the political system is further demonstrated in two articles which together report upon the results of two identical studies, performed in 1988 and 2005. The 2005 study shows a significant increase in voter cynicism and mistrust, and in parallel, a sharp decline in ideological identification and overall political interest as compared to 1988, plus a sharp decline in press usage (Diakoumakos, 2009: 96-103; Kakepaki, 2006: 115-121). However,

Diakoumakos points out that those who reported an interest in politics in 2005 reported an interest at deeper levels compared to the 1988 panels, with lower levels of self-interest and clientelistic motives, and a sharply increased understanding of their role as citizens (Diakoumakos, 2009: 104-111, 115, 119-120). Furthermore, those displaying disinterest in politics were targeting it towards the existing political system while still maintaining a high level of interest in politics overall (Ibid., 92). This demonstrates a sentiment which questions the credibility and legitimacy of the domestic political system, a result further displayed by some of the respondents of the 2005 panel who attributed the lack of credibility of the domestic political system to the fact that much policy-making is now performed outside the country by the EU (Ibid., 113). Notably, the 2005 panel was organized three years before the onset of the Greek economic crisis in earnest, indicating that such sentiments have likely deepened since then.

Pantazidou argues that the Greek political system lost much of its legitimacy in the aftermath of the widespread December 2008 protests which occurred following the shooting death of 15-year old Alexandros Grigoropoulos by a police officer. In response to this incident, the Greek government responded with further cynicism, abandoning any effort at attaining social consensus, instead imposing measures which successive governments have since admitted are unjust while subsequently utilizing police repression and scare tactics to obtain compliance. Pantazidou adds that this situation has been referred to as a "meta-democracy" (2013: 762).

Highlighting this point, Pappas and O'Malley compared civil compliance in Greece and Ireland, two countries which simultaneously experienced very similar economic crises. The authors found that Greek and Irish societies reacted in highly different ways to the onset of the crisis, a difference which is attributed to the Greek state's inability to continue providing basic

public goods as well as privileges and economic rents to beneficiaries of state clientelism. This is in contrast to the Irish case, where the state was able to continue providing services despite declining average incomes (2014: 1595). Declining trust in public institutions and a search for alternatives is therefore a more likely outcome in Greece, as compared to Ireland.

Much research has focused on crisis narratives in the Greek mass media, particularly the press and television. Mylonas, in an analysis of coverage of the crisis by the English-language *eKathimerini* daily, found that the newspaper reproduced the hegemonic definitions of the crisis in various ways, including interviews with authoritative public intellectuals who favored the austerity policies and who moralistically laid the blame for the crisis on the deficiencies of Greek society, and through the usage of stereotypes, which were often presented as facts; the narrative employed by the newspaper suggested that there was no other solution for Greece (2014: 308-316). Leandros et al., in a similar study which examined two major daily newspapers, found a similar tendency to naturalize and legitimize the economic austerity policies being implemented, while emphasizing the "necessity" of such policies for "saving" Greece despite the "high cost" (2011: 249-252). Doudaki further highlighted this tendency in a study of the discursive mechanisms employed by the Greek press in its coverage of the crisis. She identified two primary methods used by the media to accomplish this objective, including naturalization (where the austerity policies were portrayed as inevitable, with no available alternatives), and objectivation (where specific ideologies were portrayed as real and objective facts) (Doudaki, 2015: 5-10). This was further mirrored in a study of crisis coverage in the Greek press by Pleios, finding that the Greek press largely adopted elite neoliberal views (2013b: 113-117). In their study of topics covered on Greek television newscasts, Papathanassopoulos et al. found, that

societal groups who were most likely to be impacted by the austerity policies were usually not mentioned at all (2014: 99). Together, these studies highlight factors that may contribute to reduced media credibility during Greece's economic crisis, as do the studies which follow.

In a 16-day sample of 107 main evening television newscasts from 2005 performed by Kenterelidou which tested for "infoganda" methods, she found that only one-tenth of the newscasts did not contain any stories or reporting which could be classified as "infoganda" (defined by the author as the constant repetition of specific political positions and messages within news items) (2014: 124-125, 132). Papathanassopoulos argues that the Greek clientelist system is a key factor in diminishing media credibility, including television's "watchdog role" (2004: 166). The overall quality and content of newscasts, accordingly, has come into question, as evidenced by a content analysis of 1,015 television news reports from 2005 conducted by Kenterelidou and Doulkeri. They found that 46 percent of the content of the televised newscasts studied could be classified as commentary instead of news, with an almost even split in the time devoted to news reporting versus commentary for each specific story, and with the commentary frequently airing *before* the reporting of the "hard" news story (2011: 198-199). A similar content analysis analyzing main evening newscasts on major television stations from 2008, found that 38 percent of their content could be classified as commentary (Pleios, 2009: 254).

In a 10-year study of audience reactions to television newscasts in Greece, Maniou found a high percentage of disgust with news programming, and in particular with the opinionated "panel discussions" which are a prominent feature of Greek television newscasts, with a steady decline in the reported credibility of television since 1997 and an increasing number of respondents stating that watching newscasts on television would be a "waste of time" (2014:

150, 157-161, 167-169). Samaras and Papathanassopoulos, in an content analysis of two weeks' worth of television newscasts on three major stations during the pre-election period of 2004, found that 77 percent of the exchanges on a sample of televised "panel discussions" on newscasts consisted of personal and partisan attacks, while panelists were rarely non-journalists or non-politicians and almost never ordinary citizens (2005: 61, 66-67, 75-76). A content analysis of 228 newscasts from the five top-rated television stations during a four month period in 2001-2002 by Demertzis et al. found that television newscasts have eschewed their role in providing coverage of parliamentary proceedings, providing limited amounts of coverage (2005: 42-46).

An additional indicator demonstrating of the credibility crisis in Greece comes from recent surveys of media usage and news consumption. In the 2016 Reuters Institute report on digital news consumption, based on YouGov survey data gathered in early 2016 from 26 countries, including Greece (based on a sample of 2,036 individuals), a number of significant findings are revealed. 66 percent of respondents stated a strong or very strong interest in current events, 56 percent read news online more than once per day while an additional 30 percent read online news once daily, 55 percent discovered news stories via social media while 44 percent directly visited news websites, 72 percent accessed online news via personal computers and 63 percent via smartphones and tablets (Kalogeropoulos et al, 2016: 16-19, 23). Regarding media use practices, news websites and apps were most commonly cited as the respondents' main source of news (34 percent), followed by social networking sites at 27 percent, while conventional media forms such as television (21 percent), the press (5 percent), and radio (3 percent) ranked lower. Notably, 8 percent of respondents cited blogs as their most commonly-favored news source (Ibid., 24-25). In terms of social media usage, Facebook was the most

commonly used tool (80 percent) and most commonly used social medium for news (68 percent), with YouTube finishing at 75 percent and 34 percent for these two measures, and Twitter at 25 percent and 14 percent (Ibid., 26). Significantly, Greeks were the third most active users of news content online (defined as sharing news items via social media or on a blog, voting in online surveys, or "liking" or commenting on stories) at 73 percent, behind Turkey at 81 percent and Brazil at 80 percent, and ahead of countries such as the United States (56 percent) and the United Kingdom (39 percent), with 48 percent of Greek users sharing news online, 48 percent in face-to-face conversations, 38 percent leaving online comments, and 25 percent discussing news online with friends (Ibid., 28). Greece was the country with the highest usage of online-only news websites in the sample (85 percent), the highest level of consumption of "hard" news stories online (81 percent) and the lowest level of consumption of "lifestyle" news (10 percent) (Ibid., 39, 45). Notably, Greece was also the country with the lowest levels of trust in mainstream news media and journalism across the 26 countries surveyed. Only 20 percent of respondents in Greece said that they trusted the news media, 16 percent stated that they trust the mass media in general, 11 percent trusted journalists, 7 percent of respondents felt that the news media were independent of undue political influence, and 5 percent believed that the news media were free of undue economic influence (Ibid., 35-36). The 18-24 age bracket demonstrated the lowest levels of trust in the news media (15 percent), but the figure was not much higher for the most trusting age group, ages 55 and over, at 23 percent (Ibid., 37). One final notable finding is that a news blog, *tro-ma-kti-ko.blogspot.com* (a spinoff of the popular blog *Troktiko*, mentioned later in the literature review), was included among the top ten most visited news websites (Ibid., 43).

Similarly, in Eurobarometer's 2015 survey, conducted across the European Union, Greece had the lowest level of trust in the EU for radio (37 percent), television (20 percent), third-lowest trust in the press (32 percent), and fifth lowest trust in the media overall (49 percent with low or no trust). Greece's overall level of trust in the media, as measured by the Eurobarometer statistics, stems from the higher average levels of trust of the Greek public for the internet and social media, as compared to television, radio, and the press (Eurobarometer, 2015). Finally, low levels of trust in the mass media as an institution were also reflected in the aforementioned nationwide Kapa Research survey, conducted in October 2016. Only 6.5 percent of respondents stated that they trusted the mass media, representing a decline of 22 percent since 2003, with only 3 percent of likely non-voters in the next national parliamentary election stating that they trusted the mass media, and 8 percent of likely voters (Kapa Research, 2016: 6).

2.2.2 – Clientelism and Diaploki

A systemic and cultural factor closely related to institutional credibility is clientelism. Much of the existing literature highlights the long history and tradition of clientelism in Greece, as well as the prevalence of a related phenomenon, "diaploki," both of which will be defined.

Clientelism is defined as follows:

> …a personalized and reciprocal relationship between an inferior and a superior, commanding unequal resources; moreover, in contrast with the 'ideal type' of bureaucratic relationship, the norms of rationality, anonymity, and universalism are largely absent from the patron-client nexus. (Lemarchand & Legg, 1972: 151)

"Diaploki" could then be said to be the media-centric version of clientelism. It is defined as the "interplay between media owners and politicians...that determines who will influence public opinion and apply pressure in the political arena" (Sims, 2003: 203). This interplay is highly evident in the Greek media landscape, and is an attribute of the "Mediterranean" or "Polarized

Pluralist" model developed by Hallin and Mancini. According to Hallin and Mancini, the traditional centrality of the state in Southern Europe has resulted in the relatively frequent intervention of the state in media institutions—but also, the reverse as well. Since the state is such an important actor in the economy, the media becomes a battleground for influence, and for preferential access to state contracts, subsidies, relaxed regulations, and other benefits (2004: 134-135). This situation is the result of the delayed development of liberal, market institutions in Southern Europe and the resulting importance of patronage and personal relationships, where access to information is treated as a private good and not shared publicly (Ibid., 135-137).

This situation is perhaps best articulated in a common threat that was said to be traditionally used by newspaper publishers in their dealings with the government: "Give me a ministry or I will publish a newspaper!" (Papathanassopoulos, 1999: 381; Papathanassopoulos, 2004: 59). Papatheodorou and Machin, in their examination of the intimacy between the political and media elite in Greece and Spain, describe this relationship as "the umbilical cord that was never cut" (2003), mirroring previously-seen historical explanations regarding the weakness of domestic civil society, the historical lack of a mass-circulation press, and a system of state subsidies for the press, which resulted in preferential treatment (and frequent secret dealings) for publications favorable towards the government of the day (2003: 34-37). Indeed, the press subsidy system remains commonplace in Greece, with no clear law regarding the allocation of funding and state advertising (Pleios & Papathanassopoulos, 2008: 56; Tsene, 2012: 61). One final form of subsidy for the mass media in general is mentioned by Tsene, who brings up the cozy relationship that media outlets have, at times, developed with advertisers, which has

impacted their coverage, as highlighted by the relationship of the now-defunct national television broadcaster *Alter Channel* with Greece's milk cartel (Tsene, 2012: 63).

Contogeorgis, in turn, indicates that clientelist politics—within and beyond the media realm—serve the interest of party loyalists and specific interest groups, instead of targeting the society as whole. He describes the clientelist system in Greece as one that has existed since the earliest days of the modern Greek state and a phenomenon which is the norm, not the exception, at the present time and a defining feature of the relationship between politics and society (2013: 55-56, 85). Danopoulos names clientelism as the major contributor in Greece's current crisis and the country's inability to recover from it, the result of a dysfunctional, corrupt, and chaotic bureaucratic apparatus and a political system which lacks any accountability (2015: 111-125).

In sum, the above review of literature pertaining to institutional credibility, clientelism, and diaploki illustrates the many and varied factors which may contribute to a lack of trust in public institutions and the media in Greece, and a further decline in levels of trust during the years of the Greek economic crisis. These low levels of trust in the media and in public and societal institutions may, in turn, result in alternatives to these public institutions and media outlets being sought out (or developed) by members of the general public.

2.3 – The Public Sphere

In this section, my review of the existing literature on the public sphere—both pertaining to Greece and to a global context—will briefly examine the development of the idea of the "public sphere" over time, as well as the historical development of the public sphere in the Greek context and trends that are relevant to our study of the public sphere in Greece. Furthermore, a

definition of the public sphere which will guide the research will be developed and presented, and gaps in the existing body of research, particularly in the case of Greece, will be identified.

2.3.1 – Public Sphere Theory

The present-day conceptualization of the public sphere has traditionally been associated with the writings of Jürgen Habermas. According to Habermas (1989: 27), the public sphere emerged in Western Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries as a means for bourgeois society to articulate its economic interests and to assert its political autonomy from the state. It is the forum in which private individuals engage in rational-critical debate to address issues of public concern, in a self-organized, rational, and civil fashion. As further described by Dahlgren (1995: 7), the public sphere is the realm of social life where the exchange of information, and views on questions of common concern can take place in order for public opinion to be formed. This public sphere "occurs" when citizens, exercising their rights of assembly and association, gather as public bodies to discuss issues of concern, particularly of a political nature. Still another definition of the public sphere, based on the Habermasian conceptualization of the term, comes from Curran (1991: 29), who writes that in classical liberal theory, the public sphere is defined as the space between government and society, in which private individuals exercise formal (through elections) and informal (through public opinion) control over the state.

According to Habermas, the public sphere was a space of private autonomy that stood opposite from the state (1962/1989: 12), a space which provoked the critical judgment of a public through the use of reason (Ibid., 24). It was a space separate from the private, intimate, domestic sphere of family and ordinary life whilst also being detached from the state (Ibid., 28, 48). It was comprised of members of the bourgeois; privatized individuals who were owners of

goods and who were the patriarchal heads of their households, who emerged from their private, intimate sphere to participate in the public sphere (Ibid., p. 48, 55). Initially, it was borne as a literary public sphere of the arts and letters, where issues of cultural interest were discussed in public spaces such as salons and coffeehouses (Ibid., p. 29, 50). It was out of these literary public spheres that discussion about trade and other "public" matters of concern began to emerge. In Habermas' formulation, the bourgeois public sphere institutionalized the practice of rational-critical discourse on political matters, undistorted by particular interests (Ibid., 27).

Notably this conception of the public sphere was eventually undermined. His ideas foresaw a strict separation of the public and private realms, but the two realms began to blur as private organizations began to increasingly assume public roles, while the state and public institutions began to encroach upon the private sphere, as was the case with the development of the welfare state (Ibid., 175-176). According to Habermas, society becomes refeudalized, and inequalities cease to be "bracketed" (Ibid.). In his vision, rational-critical debate was supplanted by consumption and the messages transmitted by the newly-developed mass media (Ibid., 161, 171). The mass media, in Habermas' view, created a "secondary realm of intimacy," and through their messages, began to impact public opinion and to engineer "consent" in society, leading to the formation of a false consciousness amongst the public, who were now consumers of content and messages, instead of operating in the role of citizen (Ibid., 172, 194-195).

Looking at modern-day societies, Habermas later moved away from the possibility of creating a unified, institutional public sphere, instead focusing his attention on the potential of "communicative action" to "bring into the open the rational potential intrinsic in everyday communication practices" (Habermas, 1992: 442-444). This would occur within a radical

democratic framework which would seek to protect what he calls the "lifeworld," or realm of personal relationships in society, from the "system" (based on the ever-pervasive, all-powerful media) (Calhoun, 1992: 30). He views present-day societal struggles as occurring in what he calls the "political public sphere," between the "communicative generation of legitimate power" on the one hand, and the manipulative deployment of media power with the goal of securing mass loyalty, consumer demand, and public compliance. Out of this struggle, and the communicative action which results, the "rationalization of the lifeworld" arises (Habermas, 1992: 452-453). Notably, in his later conceptualization of the public sphere, and in response to the many criticisms his original theory received, Habermas opens the door to the possibility of the existence of multiple public spheres—namely, a "plebian public sphere" consisting of the culture of the common people—instead of a single and all-encompassing public sphere (Ibid., 426-430). While Habermas' original definition of the public sphere provides a starting point for understanding the existence of a sphere of public discourse in which public institutions are located, his later revisions bring media institutions into the picture. This is particularly useful to this study and to the examination of the Greek media's role in development of the Greek public sphere, and the role potentially played in contemporary times by social and new media.

Habermas' original conceptualization of the public sphere did indeed draw numerous criticisms, and resulted in the formation of new theoretical constructions of the public sphere. Fraser (1992: 122-124) harshly critiqued the "idealized" liberal public sphere of Habermas, arguing that difference, in reality, was never "bracketed," and that social groups which were excluded from the hegemonic public sphere formed a plurality of competing public spheres. These "subaltern counterpublics" exist in a contested relationship with the dominant publics

(Ibid., 128). Fraser further disputes Habermas' strict separation of the public and private spheres, arguing that the issues which count as matters of common concern are decided through a process of "discursive contestation" (Ibid., 129). More critiques of Habermas' original conceptualization of the public sphere come from scholars such as Benhabib, who argues in favor of the existence of multiple public spheres which can come into existence at any time and which can exist autonomously (1992: 87), and Eley (1992: 319), who points out Habermas' omission of issues relating to the nation-state. These alternative formulations of the public sphere are relevant to this study. For instance, Frasers' conceptualization of "subaltern counterpublics" and Benhabib's conceptualization of multiple public spheres serve as a useful tool for potentially understanding those elements of the Greek populace who are dissatisfied and distrustful of official public institutions and mainstream mass media, in terms of potentially acting as a "counterpublic" to Greece's hegemonic public sphere. Eley's emphasis on the role of the nation-state, in turn, helps anchor this study's own look at the specific case of the public sphere of Greece in particular.

More recently, several scholars have looked at the idea of the public sphere in an online context. These examinations are useful to this study's examination of the role of online tools, such as social media and other forms of new media, on the Greek public sphere. Dahlgren first defines the public sphere as a "constellation of communicative spaces" which "permit the circulation of information, ideas, debates—ideally in an unfettered manner—and also the formation of political will (i.e., public opinion)" (Dahlgren, 2005: 147-148). These are spaces where, according to Dahlgren, the mass media and new, interactive media maintain a prominent presence and "facilitate communicative links between citizens and the power holders of society" (Ibid.). Dahlgren writes that the public sphere consists of three constitutive dimensions: the

structural dimension (formal institutional features such as media organizations and legal frameworks and constraints on communication), the representational dimension (media output), and the dimension of interaction (citizens talking with each other) (Ibid., 149). Specifically regarding the internet, Dahlgren channels the formulation put forth by scholars such as Fraser and Benhabib that the idea of a single, integrated public sphere is outdated in light of the realities of modern-day society (Ibid., 152). Dahlgren argues that we must take into account "specialized communicative spaces," or "alternative or counter public spheres," noting that it is here where the Internet makes its most obvious contribution to the public sphere (Ibid.). Bennett adopts a similar view in his conceptualization of the impact of the internet on the public sphere, stating:

> The public spheres created by the Internet and the Web are more than just parallel information universes that exist independently of the traditional mass media…[n]ew media provide alternative communication spaces in which information can develop and circulate widely with fewer conventions or editorial filters than in the mainstream media. (Bennett, 2003: 161)

Finally, Papacharissi (2011: 131-137), in her own look at the relationship between the internet and the public sphere, adopts a different theory. She argues that the internet has created a private, virtual sphere, one where the citizen is "alone, but not isolated," entering the public spectrum on his/her own terms, performing atomized actions with the self as the primary point of reference, and continuously (re-)negotiating his or her privacy within this space. Papacharissi describes this new phenomenon as "mobile privatization," with the internet serving as a new hybrid public-private commercial space (Ibid., 123-128, 133).

2.3.2 – The Public Sphere in Greece and Public Involvement

One of the traditional social spaces of (masculine) Greek society was the *kafeneio*, or coffee house (Zaharopoulos & Paraschos, 1993: 5), even if it is declining in popularity and

number. It was the meeting point of the men of the village, town, or urban neighborhood where the issues of the day ranging from politics to the economy to sports would be discussed. In some ways, the *kafeneio* bears resemblance to Habermas' idealized liberal public sphere, with its own coffeehouse culture and gendered nature, although the *kafeneio* was much more akin to a "plebian public sphere," the domain of the common man, than to the literary public sphere which Habermas detected within the realm of early bourgeois society.

Nevertheless, the *kafeneio* and similar spaces continue to play a role in Greek society today. Sotiropoulos (2004: 148) references the *kafeneio* as one of the spaces of the informal public sphere in Greece. Bresta (2011: 92) refers to the traditional landscape of cities, towns, and villages in Greece, each of which has a central square, or *plateia*, which has traditionally served as a gathering place and site of socialization and has been the home of the local *kafeneio*. The role of the *plateia* as a central gathering point for political activity is evident in the protest movement of the "Indignants" in 2011. The *kafeneio* and the *plateia* could therefore be said to have served as venues which provided a "voice to the voiceless" through the years in Greece.

Urban space was also the subject of a study by Arampatzi and Nicholls, who focused on the neighborhoods of Athens as a "strategic site for producing radical subjects and subjectivities." This process due to three factors identified by the authors: a reduced ability of the state to co-opt resistance to neoliberal politics, the formation of localized mobilizations and development of stronger ties and interactions amongst citizens of the same common lived space, and the development of broader ties, as some individuals from each community maintained relations with activists in other neighborhoods, cities, and regions, converting local movements into national protests. This process enabled the development of trust and solidarity, and the

formation of common interests and mobilization frames (2012: 2591-2592). Karaliotas, again using the "Indignants" protest movement as an example, highlights the role of squares—such as Syntagma Square—as a "political space in which the protesters enacted direct democratic practices and performatively traced new ways of being, saying and acting in common," and as a space of friction between nationalist and "emancipatory" elements, as well as a hybrid site of horizontal ("leaderless") and vertical (with the Athens protest serving as the primary node in the national movement of the "Indignants") organizational practices (2017: 54-55).

Despite the prominence of public space in Greek society which is exemplified by the central square or *plateia* as a site of gathering, debate, political activity, and protest, multiple scholars argue that this has not been enough to foster a healthy and robust public sphere in Greece, fully independent of the state and leading societal institutions. As will be seen in the later sections on civil society and on clientelism and "diaploki," this is a product of the historical development of the modern Greek state,. Contogeorgis (2013: 48) argues that Greece's longstanding partisan system, instead of playing a mediating role in Greek society, has instead taken ownership of the political system and transformed public discourse into private discourse. He further argues that Greece's public intellectuals, via their rhetoric, end up reproducing the hegemonic discourse of the state and legitimizing its actions, including the decisions of recent governments to enforce harsh austerity measures (Contogeorgis 2012: 53). Contogeorgis describes these intellectuals as "organic legitimizers" of the existing system (Ibid., 237-238).

Komninou, in her examination of the historical development of the public sphere, argues that the public sphere in Greece did play an important role in nation-building for the nascent Greek state, but developed in parallel with the country's clientelist system, adding that the

attempt to graft rational discourse and Enlightenment ideals to a pre-capitalist, pre-industrial, agrarian society with a weak economy was doomed to fail (2001: 37-38). Over the course of Greece's history, numerous counter-spheres have developed, always in response and opposition to the often authoritarian hegemonic public sphere (for instance, during the Greek civil war of 1947-1949 and the military junta of 1967-1974 (Ibid., 62-64, 117-125). Indeed, Komninou argues that there was not one single counter public sphere but several, based on gender, civil war divisions, regional differences; and ideological affiliation during the years of military rule (Ibid.). Following the restoration of parliamentary democracy in 1974, a new counter sphere with a "European orientation" developed, leading up to Greece's ascension to the European Community (now EU) in 1981. However, with the re-emergence of the partisan system, and later with the commercialization and privatization of the mass media system, the public sphere was in large part commandeered by the political party system (Ibid., 136-140, 155, 176-179). Nevertheless, the Greek public sphere, in Komninou's view, did manage to grow and develop during this time, to a level approaching that of Greece's Western European counterparts (Ibid., 194-195).

Certain scholars argue that the advent of private radio and television broadcasting and deregulation of the airwaves allowed, at least in limited form, an oppositional public sphere to flourish in Greece for the first time. Vamvakas (2006: 109-110) argues that the post-junta public sphere was the first time that the opposition had access to the public sphere in Greece, via the (still state-controlled) airwaves. Rigou (2010: 50) argues that the epoch of "free radio" in the late 1980s, when private broadcasting was legally permitted for the first time in Greece, was the first time that an oppositional public sphere existed. Kogen (2010: 342) makes a similar argument, arguing that the "savage deregulation" of the Greek airwaves did have one positive effect, which

was to provide the opportunity to those who were otherwise shut out of the official public sphere to be heard for the first time. In turn, Panagiotopoulou, looking at the usage of online tools by the "Indignants" movement of 2011, adopts the position that public spheres in Greece have been temporary and ephemeral, not necessarily possessing longevity (2013: 453-454). It can be argued, in looking at the low levels of trust in Greek media institutions today, that this initial oppositional sphere which developed following the onset of private broadcasting in Greece represents one such example of an ephemeral sphere, with a new sphere (or spheres) potentially developing in the realm of social and online media.

From the standpoint of public rhetoric and participation in public discourse, a study by Kaitatzi-Whitlock in 2005 looked at the Greek press and the number of newspapers which offered the opportunity for readers' letters to be published in a "letters to the editor" section, finding that only approximately one-third of Greece's major newspapers provided such an opportunity to their audience (2005: 85-90). Finally, a study by Boukala (2014) looked at the rhetoric of Greece's two current major political parties, SYRIZA and New Democracy, on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the 2008 police killing of Alexandros Grigoropoulos, and the sudden shutdown of national public broadcaster ERT in 2013. Her analysis found that the rhetoric of both parties, from corresponding left-wing and right-wing perspectives, reproduced the polarizing rhetoric of the Greek civil war period and the military dictatorship via the process of drawing parallels between the incidents in question and old societal divisions stemming from the previously-mentioned painful eras in modern Greek history (2014: 492-493).

Some useful insights into the participation of Greek youth (and their parents) in the public sphere can be gleaned by the aforementioned DiaNEOsis/MRB poll, conducted

nationwide in the autumn of 2016. In this poll, 18.9 percent of young adults and 21 percent of parents surveyed stated that they had contacted an elected or governmental official in the prior 12 months, while 31.2 percent of young adult respondents and 19.4 percent of parents stated that they had signed a petition during this same period. 71 percent of young adult respondents stated that they discuss social and political issues with friends often or some of the time, while 60.3 percent said that they often or sometimes discuss such issues with their parents, 42.5 percent with other relatives, 41.2 percent with work colleagues, 38.4 percent with other students, and 19.0 percent with neighbors (2017: 43, 53).

2.3.3 – Summing up the Public Sphere

Having examined the relevant literature regarding the public sphere in both a global context and a Greek context, it will be useful to develop a definition of the public sphere which will guide this study. A definition of the public sphere presented by Reddy nicely sums up the concepts addressed in the literature. According to Reddy, the modern public sphere refers to "those institutions open to the public and those practices, which any member of the public may engage in, that are characteristic of modern societies…to museums, theaters, libraries, galleries, schools, and universities; cafés, stores, stock exchanges (and, in general, markets); courts, legislatures, town halls; the print and, more recently, electronic media (1992: 136).

The existing literature on the public sphere in the context of Greece focuses mostly on its historical development. There is very little research on the public sphere vis-à-vis the mainstream media, and even less research on the relationship between social media or new media and their relationship to the Greek public sphere. Additionally, there is a lack of research on oppositional

public spheres which may have developed in Greece during the time period of the economic crisis. This research project addresses many of these gaps in the existing body of research.

2.4 – Civil Society

In the section which follows, my review of literature relating to civil society—both on a global basis and in Greece—will examine and define the very concept of the "civil society" (or "third sector," as it is often referred to in Europe), its historical development in Greece, and possible factors which have contributed to its potentially less than robust development, particularly in relation to issues of institutional credibility, clientelism, patronage, and diaploki. The existing literature on the Greek civil society will also be examined, particularly with reference to trends which may point towards a rejuvenation or growth of the civil society sector in contemporary Greece, and the potential impact of social media and online tools. Finally, gaps in the existing research, in particular with relation to Greece, will be highlighted.

2.4.1 – Civil Society Theory

The concept of "civil society" is hardly new within liberal political theory. It is originally derived from two major traditions, which are separate and distinct from the historical origins of public sphere theory, even though the two concepts are related. One tradition derives from John Locke and his concept of natural law, where individuals would contract amongst themselves to establish government while retaining the right to change the government if it failed to serve its purpose. In this regard, civil society would be based on a self-directing society of individuals who would legitimize but also provide resistance to a limited government (see Elliott: 2015, 5). The second tradition stems from the eighteenth-century French intellectuals Montesquieu and

Alexis de Tocqueville, who believed in the power of associanism—the formation of a multitude of independent, local associations—to limit the absolutist state (Ibid., 5-6).

In the 19th century, Hegel added a third—and significantly different—tradition to the mix. In Hegel's third view, civil society as the fragmented, selfish, hedonistic space where individuals pursue their particular interests (Ibid., 6). Habermas, in the 20th century, adopted a more traditional view, defining civil society as a private sphere emancipated from public authority, but also separate from the public sphere (1962/1989: 79). For Gramsci though, civil society was the site where hegemony operates: the space where the ruling class extends and reinforces its power over citizens via nonviolent means (Buttigieg, 1995: 27). Furthermore, this process would occur non-coercively, with the apparatuses of hegemonic power camouflaged within the institutions of civil society (including the press, libraries, schools, associations, the Catholic Church, and even urban architecture) assuming a "matter-of-factness" in daily life, creating a tacit, manufactured consent (Ibid., 6-7, 22, 26-27). Civil society, for Gramsci, consisted of three components: the state, the economy, and society (Dahlgren, 1995: 126-127). In Gramsci's view, there was nothing "matter-of-fact" regarding civil society, which he viewed as an arena that was very much up for grabs and which held within it the potential conditions through which citizens, including "organic intellectuals" arising from below, could, via a "war of position," disable the coercive state apparatus and overcome self-censorship on the part of the hegemonic media outlets (Buttigieg, 1995: 6-7; Downing, 2001: 15-16). In the case of Greece, a Gramscian view of the civil society is particularly relevant, in light of the credibility crisis suffered by "taken for granted" state and public institutions, as well as the press and mass media.

Dahlgren's understanding of civil society is intricately tied to conceptions of the public sphere, which he argues requires "publics" (with the capacity to interact) instead of passive audiences. Such "publics" are not audience members, but citizens, found in civil society (Dahlgren, 1995: 120). In a country with what is said to be a weak public sphere and weak civil society though, do such "publics" exist? This point bears noting with regard to Greece.

A more contemporary view is expressed by Castells. While broadly defining civil society as the organized expression of the views originating out of the public sphere (2008: 78-79), he makes the case for the development of a *global* civil society in our contemporary world today. Referencing the diminished ability of national political systems to manage problems of a global nature, he identifies various trends. One such trend is the growth and increased prominence and visibility of global and international NGOs which take over an advocacy role on behalf of the public within the auspices of a "global public sphere" while undermining the traditional role of the government. Other trends include the development of global social movements that are attempting to counteract the forces of globalization, and the formation of a new global public opinion, derived from autonomous (digital) networks of communication enabled by the Internet and wireless communications systems (Ibid., 83-87). With relevance to Greece, it could potentially be argued that the economic crisis plaguing the country, as well as protest movements which have arisen in response to the crisis, such as the movement of the "Indignants," which were also seen in Spain and other countries, reflect such trends. Conversely, Papacharissi, within the context of the privatized virtual sphere that she has conceptualized, foresees the breakup of civil society into consumer-driven citizen spheres, serving the public good via participation in the private marketplace (2013: 19, 91). Perhaps such a breakup is underway in the Greek case.

Numerous definitions of civil society exist without there being an apparent consensus. A simple definition of the civil society, or "third sector" (as it is alternately called, especially in Europe) refers to "a realm of activity that is independent from both market and state" (Clarke et al., 2015: 2). Mavrikos-Adamou defines civil society "as the space between the state and individual which is occupied by autonomous citizens' organizations and associations whose activities are organized and have a collective character" (2015: 45). Finally, Close highlights three characteristics of civil society: general respect for the law; developed and active respect by citizens for the common good and high valuation of public goods; and readiness among citizens to form voluntary organizations, particularly with objectives of public benefit (2014: 53).

2.4.2 – Civil Society in Greece

As seen previously with the case of the public sphere, civil society in Greece is viewed by many, if not most, commentators and scholars as having developed only partially or in an atrophic manner. This stunted development is largely attributed to the long history of clientelism and partisan dominance in all aspects of social and economic life in Greece, from the earliest days of the modern Greek state up until the present time.

Contogeorgis makes extensive reference to this history in his analysis. Going back to the early days of the fledgling Greek state, he argues that the new state was developed with non-representative, non-democratic structures which did not resemble in the slightest the communal *polis* with which Greek society traditionally operated, even under Ottoman occupation. According to Contogeorgis, this created a "society of subjects" (2013: 66). In the Greek context today, he views civil society as consisting of interest groups that hold a position of authority in society and influence within the political process. These groups represent interests which

contradict those of society at large, or which are dependent on corrupt relations with the state—an attribute he ascribes to most NGOs (2012: 111). These factors may help explain the low credibility of such institutions in Greek society.

Komninou looks at the development of the public sphere and civil society in Greece from a historical perspective, identifying the traditional strong state and intense party clientelism in Greece as an obstacle for the formation of a strong, autonomous civil society (2001: 55-62). She points out that in the immediate aftermath of the fall of the military junta, there was a blossoming of civil society groups—particularly environmental and feminist groups—which, however, faced fierce opposition from the established political parties, even those of the left, and which in the 1980s managed to successfully absorb most of these groups (Ibid., 176-179, 195).

Danopoulos provides a similar view in his review of democratic accountability in Greece today. He attributes a host of deficiencies in the Greek system today, including lack of state and government accountability, to Greece's extensive history of clientelism, patronage, and partisan rule. Weak civil societies are characterized by factors such as the absence of internal democracy, lack of intergroup cooperation, and low levels of pluralism, arguing that Greece displays many of these attributes, as well as high in-group collectivism, pervasive localism, and ambiguous attitudes towards merit, characterizing civil society in Greece today as "feeble" (Danopoulos, 2015: 128). He adds that NGOs suffer from similar ills as a result of their financial dependence on the state and lack of internal democracy, in addition to low levels of credibility and trust among the general public (Ibid., 129). This implies that civil society is not free of the credibility crisis which also plagues public institutions and the mass media in Greece.

Close identifies the reluctance of Greek citizens to form voluntary associations for public benefit and the "irresponsible" way in which political parties, trade unions, and municipal authorities co-opt civil society organizations for their own ends (2014: 53), but nevertheless identifies successes of the environmental movement in Greece, including preventing the construction of a nuclear power station in the late 1970s (Ibid., 56-60). Simiti points at one of the dominant aspects of traditional Greek society, the immediate and extended family, and their role in filling gaps in the provision of social welfare services by the state (2015: 14). She extensively references the actions of civil society groups, both formal and informal, during the economic crisis, identifying an increase in the number of NGOs during the crisis and closer cooperation between NGOs and local authorities, but not with the Church of Greece or trade unions. Simiti also highlights the fragmented nature of the Greek NGO sector due to competition for limited state funds and due to their close relations with political parties (Ibid., 17-19).

On the other hand, "alternative" or informal networks have also shown signs of increased activity, often operating without a legal basis but with the informal acceptance of local authorities (Ibid., 24-29). Similarly, Clarke identifies a new wave of "crisis volunteering" in Greece, distinct from previous patterns of volunteering as it originates in a bottom-up, instead of top-down, manner (2015: 68). Clarke adds that most organizations in Greece report an increase in volunteers during the crisis, and that there is a paradoxical rise in social solidarity despite declining levels of social trust (Ibid., 72-73). She points out that Greek volunteerism today shares characteristics with examples of volunteering in other difficult periods, but warns that volunteerism may decline when the crisis subsides (Ibid., 79). Jones et al., however, contradict these findings, arguing that while there has been a decrease in institutional trust towards actors

such as the EU and the Greek Parliament, there is a trend of increasing social trust in Greek society, which prior to 2008 was measured as the lowest in Europe (2015: 33-35). Mavrikos-Adamou identifies particularized trust as an important factor, with "unsocial" capital (defined as lowered civil engagement as a result of distrust towards politicians and political parties) and localized, informal bonding networks playing a preeminent role in Greek civil society (2015: 46-48). Mavrikos-Adamou adds that such forms of civil society are incompatible with existing measures of civil society activity (Ibid., 61). An argument could therefore be put forth regarding the increased robustness of the Greek civil society during the crisis, which however is not being captured by traditional methods of measuring civil society's activity and effectiveness.

Huliaras (2015) argues that there were high expectations for the growth of Greek civil society in the period between 2010 and 2012 as a result of the worsening crisis, but expectations have not been met, as civil society is still unable to provide reliable and large-scale social services (9-10). Huliarias highlights examples of increased volunteering, such as during the Athens 2004 Olympic Games, in the aftermath of the destructive earthquake of 1999 in Athens, and after the widespread forest fires outside of Athens in 2007, but describes these examples as "fleeting" (Ibid., 18-20). He does, however, identify a discernible civil society separate from traditional political actors developing in Greece for the first time via virtual activism. This new civil society, says Huliaras, largely pertains to human rights issues, is mainly left-wing politically, tends to be secular, and typically attracts youth and young adults (Ibid., 23). It, too, can be fleeting, however, much like Greece's ephemeral public spheres discussed earlier.

Afouxenidis and Garidaki, in their study, map Greek civil society organizations and identify two primary categories: NGOs and officially established groups, and informal citizen

initiatives such as local solidarity groups, the latter of which operate without legal standing and typically on a localized level, in an activist fashion, and in many cases on a purely ad hoc basis (2014: 137-138). Pantazidou also identifies the role of such informal civil society groups, stating that an unprecedented number of citizens have moved away from traditional, representative, recognized forms of citizen organization towards citizen-led, anti-hierarchical, horizontal networks which resist the impacts of the crisis on a citizen-to-citizen basis, including open popular neighborhood assemblies (2013: 758, 763-765). Kallas further identifies this informal civil society sphere, highlighting the significant role they played in the aftermath of the 1999 Athens earthquake, where 90 percent of groups which were active in rescue and recovery efforts were of such an informal nature (2004: 218-226). Kallas argues that there is not a steady civil society sector in Greece, but it has shown the capability to respond in times of crisis (Ibid., 227). Sotiropoulos further identifies the existence of such an unofficial civil society, including in the aftermath of the 1999 earthquake, arguing that there is limited space in the official Greek public sphere for civil society, but that such groups exist outside the official sphere and are an area of civil society strength for Greece (2004: 145-146, 155), while in another paper, Sotiropoulos highlights the role of informal groups in the protests that were organized following the destructive forest fires of 2007 and the police shooting of Grigoropoulos in December 2008 (2013: 164-167). In turn, Vathakou highlights the many informal civil society initiatives which emerged in the aftermath of the protest movement of the "Indignants," and an overall rapid increase in citizen initiatives, including a citizen-organized referendum against the privatization of the municipal water utility in the city of Thessaloniki in 2014 (2014: 167, 179). She, however, identifies the lack of a mature culture of dialogue and cooperation in Greece as a challenge for

civil society (Ibid., 182). Kavoulakos adds to this view, pointing out the influence of the December 2008 protests in forming new civil society groups, such as the "I Don't Pay" movement and other groups, while questioning whether these groups have a post-crisis expiration date (2015: 340, 350-351). What these studies all ultimately question is the longevity of these new civil society initiatives, in light of prior fleeting examples of civil society organizations and ephemeral counter public spheres in Greece. It therefore follows that any increased robustness of Greek civil society during the crisis could also be questioned as to whether it signifies a permanent societal shift, or represents a repetition of past trends.

Boulgaris adopts a viewpoint contrary to that of most scholars, arguing that Greek civil society is stronger than portrayed, that the interventionist role of the state has been overstated and that the robust existence of opposition movements has been ignored, while warning against judging the quality of civil society purely on quantitative measures (2006: 6, 24-29). Similarly, in looking at the number of civil society organizations in operation, Botetzagias argues that a higher number of such groups does not necessarily equate to a better civil society, due to the risk of professionalization, homophily, and development in a formalistic manner (2006: 72-75).

In 2013, a survey conducted by the HumanGrid non-governmental organization in conjunction with polling firm QED, consisting of a sample of 1001 individuals nationwide, found a sharp increase in the participation of Greeks in volunteer initiatives since the beginning of the economic crisis in 2010. 44 percent of respondents who volunteered said that they began after 2010, with a 13 percent increase in volunteerism in 2010, a 7 percent increase in 2011, and a 20 percent increase in 2012, the year that Greece's second memorandum of understanding was signed with its "troika" of lenders. Nevertheless, only 3 percent of respondents stated that they

participated in an official volunteer organization, perhaps reflecting the mistrust of Greeks towards non-governmental organizations. Similarly, a mere 5 percent of the sample stated that they consistently participated in volunteer initiatives, while an additional 7 percent said they participated on occasion. Conversely, 85 percent of respondents answered that they had never previously volunteered, though 34 percent of respondents said that it was likely they would do so in the future and 38 percent stated that they themselves might be in need of help from a volunteer organization in the near future, with the largest percentage coming in the 35-44 age bracket. Further reflecting the aforementioned likely mistrust towards NGOs, 52 percent of respondents stated their belief that mistrust in official volunteer organizations was to blame for low levels of volunteerism in Greece in comparison to the EU norm, while an additional 40 percent stated their belief that NGOs represent other interests. A further 36 percent blamed low participation on the individualistic nature of the Greek people, 35 percent felt that it was the state's responsibility to provide such services, 32 percent blamed a low level of information and knowledge about such activities, while 9 percent stated their belief that Greek society has other mechanisms in place to deal with the issues handled by NGOs and volunteer organizations.

Further results from the HumanGrid/QED survey showed that the most significant increase in volunteer activity and participation came in the following areas: food and clothing drives, providing health care services for the poor and uninsured, participation in an exchange or barter economy, involvement in human rights initiatives, and participation in environmental causes and neighborhood groups. Overall, 83 percent of respondents expressed a favorable view of volunteerism, but only 50 percent provided a positive view of NGOs and 46 percent responded favorably towards the activities of activist groups (2013: 1-19).

A more recent poll seems to confirm a continued increase in volunteerism in the midst of the economic crisis, as compared to the 2013 HumanGrid/QED poll. A nationwide poll conducted by the aforementioned DiaNEOsis provides an insightful look into the attitudes of young adults and their parents on various aspects of participation in civil society. In this poll, conducted in the autumn of 2016, 54.7 percent of young adult respondents stated that they participated in volunteer activities, with 25 percent participating for less than one hour per week, 18.1 percent for 1 to 3 hours weekly, 7.6 percent for 4 to 7 hours weekly, and 4 percent for more than 8 hours per week, while the overall average time of participation averaged 143.28 minutes. In contrast, 44.8 percent of parents polled stated that they engaged in volunteerism, but for an overall average of 155.36 minutes per week. Only 13 percent of young adult respondents stated that they participate in a labor union or organization (compared to 20.5 percent of parents), while a mere 9.9 percent of youth surveyed said that they volunteer for a political party (with a similar figure for parents, at 10.3 percent) (2017: 22-23). In the same survey, young adults provided a trustworthiness level of 3.7 out of a scale of 10 for non-governmental organizations, mirroring the 3.8 ranking provided by parents who were polled. 21.0 percent of young adults polled stated that they had worked for some kind of non-profit group or organization in the preceding 12 months (along with 16.0 of parents surveyed), 44.5 percent had donated to a charitable cause within the prior 12 months (compared to 52.8 percent of parents), while 21.8 percent of young adults (and 20.8 percent of parents) said that they had participated in “alternative” social causes, such as urban gardening, in the previous 12 month period (2017: 43, 50).

2.4.3 – Summing up civil society

Having looked at the existing body of research on civil society from both a global and a Greek perspective, and having examined the various conceptualizations of civil society presented in the relevant literature, it is useful to develop a definition of civil society that will anchor this research project. For the purposes of this study, Clarke et al's simple definition of civil society—also referred to as the "third sector" which lies between the public and private realms—as "a realm of activity that is independent from both market and state," is the most suitable (Clarke et al., 2015: 2). This definition effectively covers the range of activities which take place outside of the official public sector and beyond the private sphere of home and family, and includes non-profit organizations and NGOs, volunteer initiatives, trade unions, social movements and other activist and grassroots movements, community groups, consumer groups, religious groups, foundations, and private voluntary organizations. We can also adopt Close's three characteristics of civil society, which include general respect for the law; developed and active respect by citizens for the common good and high valuation of public goods; and readiness among citizens to form voluntary organizations, particularly with objectives of public benefit (2014: 53).

Similarly to the body of literature on the public sphere in Greece, existing research on Greek civil society has generally not examined the relationship of social and new media to civil society. In addition, other than research which relates to clientelism and, in particular, to the phenomenon of "diaploki," there is not much research which looks at civil society and its relationship with the mainstream mass media. While there does exist a fair amount of literature which looks at the growth of civil society in Greece in recent years, and in particular during the early years of the Greek economic crisis, there is not nearly as much research that has examined

the longevity (or lack thereof) of civil society groups which arose specifically during the crisis, or how social and new media may have been utilized by such groups. These gaps will, in part, be examined as part of this research project.

2.5 – Greek Mainstream Media Landscape

In order to comprehend the framework in which social media and new online media have entered the picture in Greece, as well as understanding what they may be serving as an alternative *to*, it is imperative that the Greek mainstream media and its history and development are examined. This review becomes even more important when considering that the media, and particularly the traditional, mainstream media, can be considered pillars of the hegemonic public sphere, while their diminished credibility in Greece has potentially opened the door to alternative media to supplant them as trusted sources of news and information.

2.5.1 – The Greek Mainstream Media

The concepts of clientelism and "diaploki" in Greece directly apply to the Greek mainstream media landscape, as "diaploki," by definition, refers to the interplay between strong media and business moguls in Greece, and the state, the government of the day, and major political parties. There is much that can be said about the Greek media landscape, from a legal, economic, political, and programmatic perspective, and this literature review does not profess to be exhaustive. Some of the key aspects of the Greek media system are nevertheless highlighted.

According to Hallin and Mancini, the Greek media system, just like the media systems of the other Mediterranean countries of Southern Europe such as Spain and Portugal, can be classified under the "Mediterranean" or "Polarized Pluralist" model. While this model will be described in further detail in a later chapter, it should be noted that the four dimensions which

Hallin and Mancini use to develop their media models include the following: the development of media markets (via the existence of a strong or weak mass circulation press), the degree of political parallelism (the degree and nature of links between the media and the political parties, or the degree in which the media reflect the major political divisions in society), the development of journalistic professionalism, and the degree and nature of state intervention in the media system (2004: 21). The system of "polarized pluralism," according to the authors, has a tendency to be more common in countries which have seen a weaker development of civil society, with a tendency of political parties to fill the organizational void (Ibid: 54). The polarized pluralist model's key characteristics include the existence of an elite-oriented press with a relatively small circulation and media outlets which tend to be economically marginal and in need of state subsidies, a centrality of electronic (broadcast) media, and a public broadcasting system that tends to be directly state-controlled (Ibid., 73). With a weak, small-circulation press, the public in these countries is much more reliant on electronic media and television tends to be king, with a preeminent role in the formation of mass public opinion (Ibid., 24-25, 97). As indicated earlier in the literature review, this is of direct relevance to the case of Greece, where civil society and the public sphere, including the institution of the press, are viewed as being atrophic in comparison to most other countries in Western Europe and North America.

Hallin and Mancini cite countries such as Spain, Portugal, and Greece as exemplifying this model. These countries were the last authoritarian regimes in Western Europe and the last to transition to liberal democracy (Ibid., 89). In turn, freedom of the press and the development of commercial media generally arrived later (Ibid., 73). In these countries today, social consensus tends to be low while social cleavages are likely to be deeply rooted, alongside wide questioning

of the legitimacy of the political system, and a history of political conflict and regime change (Ibid., 59). Furthermore, a common characteristic of these countries has been the traditional deployment of media outlets as instruments in political and power struggles. Even after these countries achieved a democratic system of governance, political factionalism remained strong, as did the longstanding tradition of media outlets being utilized as a means of ideological expression and political mobilization (Ibid., 60-63, 89-90).

Hallin and Mancini point out that the late development of liberal institutions in these countries is closely connected to the significant degree of clientelism and the relatively slow emergence of rational-legal authority (Ibid., 135-136). According to the authors, political clientelism remains persistently strong in Southern Europe (Ibid., 58). This directly relates to the questions regarding institutional credibility, clientelism, and "diaploki" in the Greek context. Relating to this point, Hallin and Mancini further point out that in "polarized pluralist" countries, there is a high degree of political parallelism, where the media system tends to parallel the political party system (Ibid., 26-28). In such a system, there are strong traditions of advocacy and commentary-oriented journalism, and a strong media focus on political life (Ibid., 60-61, 73).

Another characteristic of the "polarized pluralist" model is the high degree of instrumentalization of the press and mass media by the government, the political parties, and/or by industrialists and economic actors with strong political ties and who seek to bolster their political influence and to gain access to lucrative state contracts (Ibid., 37, 73, 113-115, 134-135). The state itself intervenes heavily in the media, via control of public service broadcasting, the (often partisan-tainted) distribution of press subsidies, and through the selective enforcement of laws and regulations regarding media concentration and ownership, broadcast licensing,

political communication, libel and slander, and media content (Ibid., 43-44). A credibility crisis often stems from this; in "polarized pluralist" countries Hallin and Mancini identify a tendency for journalists and media personnel to be active in political life, to hold parallel employment with political parties, or for their career paths to be shaped by their political affiliation (Ibid., 28). In the case of Greece, it can be said that this is recognized by the public, as evidenced by survey data which indicates particularly low levels of trust in journalists and the news media, and an extremely strong perception that the media are neither free of political nor economic influence.

From a regulatory point of view, Hallin and Mancini point out that where clientelism is strong, as is the case in "polarized pluralist" countries, adherence to legal norms is generally weaker: powerful actors in the media landscape utilize their political connections to avoid inconvenient regulations. A vicious cycle ensures where politicians pressure media owners with threats of selective enforcement of the law while media owners and prominent journalists pressure public officials by threatening to selectively expose wrongdoing (Ibid., 58-59). This is reflective of a concept originating from political science, "capture theory" or "regulatory capture," which in a media studies context is defined as "the view that regulators are influenced by the interests of the industries they regulate" (Danesi, 2009: 54; Etzioni, 2009: 319-320).

Specifically in the case of Greece, Hallin and Mancini point out that newspapers in particular have always been used as political instruments above all, often with close ties to the state or political parties which have provided financial subsidies and other forms of support. As is typically the case in "polarized pluralist" countries, Greek journalists tend to be strongly opinionated and politically engaged, with a strong tradition of advocacy journalism (2004: 98).

Hallin and Mancini characterize the development of the commercial broadcast sector in the countries of Southern Europe, including Greece, as an example of "savage deregulation," a term introduced by Traquina (1995) to describe the phenomenon in Portugal. In Southern Europe, commercial radio and television was introduced in an uncontrolled way, without the imposition of significant public-service requirements or other regulations. According to the authors, Greece fits this model well, since private radio and television stations proliferated in the late 1980s, led by the then-opposition parties and operating on a pirate basis, forcing the then-government to deregulate the airwaves after the fact. Subsequent attempts to regulate the airwaves were largely ineffective. In the Greek case, state broadcaster ERT, a cornerstone of the hegemonic public sphere, was particularly battered by this transition. Its television audience share dropped to the lowest percentage of any public broadcaster in Europe following deregulation (Ibid., 125; Papathanassopoulos, 2004: 154). This situation led to the development of a "prima facie" pluralism (Daremas, 2004: 36) as also pointed out by Komninou, who argued that the number of different choices available does not equate, on its own, to pluralism (2004: 185). This point was further echoed by Smyrnaios, who argued that the high competition of the Greek media landscape has resulted in homogeneity instead of pluralism, since broadcasters struggle to survive and maintain their footing in a highly fractured marketplace (2009: 154). Papathanassopoulos has described this as a situation where the mass media are driven by supply than by demand, rather than the other way around (2001: 113). Indeed, in the case of the press, despite continuous declines in sales and circulation figures, the number of titles in circulation has shown a tendency to increase (Ibid., 120). State subsidies (typically in the form of government advertising) is one factor explaining this phenomenon, as well as the usage of these publications

as loss leaders, subsidized by the other business endeavors of their respective owners with the goal of providing a public platform for their point of view. The "prima facie" pluralism that has resulted belies a lack of diversity heard in the press and on the airwaves, and offers a potential opening for alternative media, as well as social and new media, to fill the void.

Conversely, Vovou argues that the deregulation of broadcasting in Greece was *not* an example of savage deregulation and did not occur in conditions of "anarchy," but rather was the result of political battles which transpired in Greece during the late 1980s, a time of political instability and frequent changes of government (2009: 117-119). Similarly, Kogen, in a study examining broadcast deregulation in Greece and Thailand, argues that Greece does *not* represent an example of savage deregulation. Instead, deregulation occurred in both countries as a result of the actions of civilians and oppositional political actors, who were shut out of the existing broadcast landscape and sought a presence on the airwaves in order to fill this gap. Unlike the cases of Italy and Portugal, there was nothing "legal" about this deregulation, as it occurred prior to the changing of the regulatory regime for broadcasting (2010: 340-342). What this debate does illustrate, in any event, is the very different manner in which the broadcasting landscape was deregulated and subsequently developed in Greece, as compared to most other countries of Western and Northern Europe, as well as North America.

Indeed, when the first attempts at regulation finally occurred in the late 1980s, the initial legislation permitting the licensing of privately-owned television broadcasters provided a clear advantage for publishers and those with existing media experience, as well as for local municipal authorities (Frangiskou, 2015: 480; Komninou 2001: 182-183; Papathanassopoulos, 1993: 250). This indicated the level of politicization which was incorporated into the private broadcasting

landscape from day one, essentially reproducing the hegemonic public sphere of the press on the deregulated airwaves. The high level of politicization was further evident from the fact that the oppositional political voices who called for the deregulation of the airwaves and who launched Greece's first non-state radio stations in 1987 were the then-mayors of Greece's three largest cities, all members of the New Democracy party, which at the time was Greece's main opposition party (Zaharopoulos, 2003: 234).

This politicization, as well as clientelist relations, are likely factors in the inability for multiple, successive governments to fully allocate broadcast licenses ever since deregulation first occurred in the late 1980s (Psychogiopoulou & Kandyla, 135). Indeed, this situation seems to have replicated itself with the transition to digital television broadcasting, where once again, a formal licensing framework has not been established, once again reproducing the existing hegemonic public sphere (2010: 28-38). When spasmodic attempts at regulation have been made by various governments, the result has invariably been heavy-handed and undemocratic, lacking in transparency and resulting in tremendous controversy. One example is the licensing process of Athenian radio stations in 2001-2002, when the government used the excuse of interference with aviation frequencies to shut down, in one night, dozens of radio stations, while the stations that did remain on the air received their licenses under less-than-transparent circumstances (Nevradakis, 2014c; Nevradakis, 2012: 136-137; Sims, 2003: 203-213).

The emblematic example of such heavy-handed and spasmodic government regulation of broadcasting came, however, with the sudden and unprecedented shutdown of national public broadcaster ERT on June 11, 2013 via a so-called "act of legislative content" which was not initially reviewed by the Greek Parliament prior to being enforced (Psychogiopoulou & Kandyla,

142). ERT was replaced by a new, trimmed-down state broadcaster, NERIT, which nevertheless was beset by many of the same structural and operational problems of ERT (Iosifidis & Katsirea, 2015: 6). After the SYRIZA-led coalition government entered office following the January 2015 elections, ERT was reopened—but once again replicated the same structural anomalies, such as lack of independence from the state, as those of NERIT (Papathanassopoulos, 2015: 473).

It could be said that the example for anomie and double standards on the Greek airwaves is set by the government itself. For instance, current broadcast legislation in Greece has required all broadcast stations to classify their programming as either "news" or "entertainment." Stations who are classified as airing "news" programming have the legal right to switch classifications to "entertainment" programming, but the same legal privilege is not afforded to "entertainment" stations— effectively creating a closed market for broadcast news, while conversely, radio and television stations operated by political parties are exempt from licensing requirements at all (Nevradakis, 2014d). This effectively limits access to the public sphere to a select few, at least via broadcast means. The failed and highly controversial attempt by the SYRIZA-led governing coalition, in September 2016, to auction off a limited number of television licenses for nationwide broadcast coverage, with the intention to shut down the remaining stations which would not be licensed, further demonstrates this point (Nevradakis, 2016). The haphazard nature of the Greek broadcast landscape, where most broadcast stations have, for decades, operated with, at best, provisional broadcast permits, has given rise to the saying that in Greece, "nothing is more permanent than the provisional" (Papathanassopoulos, 2004: 70).

Returning to Hallin and Mancini, the two authors revisited their comparative models of media systems in a recent paper, highlighting the persistence of these models despite widespread

predictions of a convergence towards the "Liberal" model. Replication of the existing system was highlighted as one possibility, while other possibilities were that national online media might converge with global economic and media systems and undermine national media systems, or that they might remain nationally rooted while becoming distinct from the incumbent national media model (Hallin and Mancini, 2016: 162-165).

In the meantime, a section of the Greek media landscape which continues to struggle, with potential implications for public discourse, is the print media sector. Circulation figures in Greece have been in a free-fall since the 1980s (Bakounakis & Papathanassopoulos, 2010: 62-64, 67-68; Kokkinidis, 2018; Siapera 2015: 452). Recent Eurobarometer statistics show Greece was in the last place in the EU with regards to the percentage of the population which reads newspapers daily. The figure for Greece was 7 percent, the respective figure for Finland and Luxembourg (which were in first place) was 67 percent in 2015 (Eurobarometer, 2015).

2.5.2 – Summing up Research on the Greek Media Landscape

Two broad conclusions can be drawn from the examination of relevant literature on the Greek media landscape, in relation to this study. First, it is clear that the strong interplay—or "diaploki"—between media owners and business interests, the state, and the government—has long anchored the media's position in Greece's hegemonic public sphere. However, these very same factors can also be argued to have directly contributed to the potentially atrophic development of the Greek public sphere and civil society, and to be directly contributing to the credibility crisis suffered by these same media institutions today. This, in turn, opens the door for the development of multiple or counter public spheres, in the form of alternative sources of news and information, many of which may exist online and which may be facilitated by social media.

In terms of the existing research, the existing body of literature on the Greek mainstream media has largely focused on television and the press. Much less research exists on the Greek radio landscape, and though there are frequent references in the body of research on the haphazard regulatory status of the Greek broadcast landscape, very little of this research is up-to-date or complete. Even the hallmark Hallin and Mancini examination of southern European media systems paid far less attention to Greece than to the media landscapes in countries such as Italy or Spain. Examinations of institutional credibility in Greece have also not sufficiently addressed the credibility of the mass media as an institution. As far as can be ascertained, there exists only one book published which exclusively examines Greek mainstream media from an operational, regulatory, and societal perspective—and this book was published in 1993. While some general societal characteristics still remain relevant from that era, much more has changed. Background information regarding the present-day mainstream media landscape in Greece is of direct relevance to a study of the impacts of social and new media on the public sphere and civil society, as it allows us to examine the framework and context in which social and new media have developed, and what they might be serving as an alternative *to*.

Furthermore, and of direct relevance to this research project, there is little research which has examined the relationship of Greek mainstream media to social and new media, or, in turn, how the mainstream media in Greece have responded to "competition" from social and new media. Additionally, a surprisingly small amount of research exists pertaining to the shutdown of Greek national public broadcaster ERT in June 2013, the social and new media campaign which followed (along with protests), the launch of temporary public broadcaster "DT" and ERT

replacement "NERIT," and the reopening of ERT in 2015. The social and new media reaction to the ERT shutdown, in particular, will be further examined later in this dissertation.

2.6 – Alternatives to Mainstream Media

This section will review the body of literature on various alternatives to traditional mass media such as television, radio, and the printed press. These alternatives include social media, new media, and the blogosphere; and what is broadly defined as "alternative," "radical," "citizens'" or "community" media. The purpose of examining these areas of research is to attain a stronger understanding of what "alternative" media might be alternative *to* and what makes them alternative in the first place, and whether online mediums such as social networking tools and blogs, can serve as venues or hosts for such alternative media efforts. Additionally, gaps in the existing research, particularly in relation to the Greek case, will be located.

2.6.1 – Social Media, New Media, and the Blogosphere

boyd and Ellison define social networking websites as follows:

> Web-based services that will allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. (boyd & Ellison, 2007: 211)

In turn, Papacharissi describes social network websites as sites which "extend the connectivity and mobility of the private sphere by providing online spaces that host offline and online networks of social relations" (2013: 139-140). These two similar definitions will guide our understanding of social media going forward.

Defining weblogs, or blogs, can be trickier, however. As noted by Garden, a precise definition of blogs is challenging to pin down because blogs can take on a great variety of attributes and characteristics. Two main categorizations that are prevalent in the attempts to

define blogs are those of affordances and design characteristics on the one hand, and genres of communication on the other. While there is general consensus that a blog is a *type* of website which uses blog software to simplify the creation and management of content, disputes arise in scholarly debates over whether a website can only be considered a blog if it contains links to other blogs, whether visitor comments are permitted or not, and whether they are professionally managed or not. Others base their definition on content, while still others dispute whether blogs comprise a medium or a genre (2011: 487-494).

For our purposes, the definition proffered by *Wikipedia* is considered sufficient:

> Blogs are "[a] type of website … with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video. Entries are commonly displayed in reverse-chronological order … Many blogs provide commentary or news on a particular subject; others function as more personal online diaries. A typical blog combines text, images, and links to other blogs, web pages, and other media related to its topic. The ability of readers to leave comments in an interactive format is an important part of many blogs. (Wikipedia, 2010, quoted in Garden, 2010: 490)

For this study, blogs will be included in a broader category of "new media" outlets, alongside social networking websites (such as Facebook and Twitter) and web 2.0 applications such as online radio. Papathanassopoulos et al. list blogs as one of six types of social mediums, the others being social networking websites, wikis, podcasts, fora, and content communities (such as YouTube). The authors also highlight Twitter as an example of "microblogging" (2013: 23-24).

Papacharissi describes the online sphere as a social private sphere, arguing that a transition has taken place towards the formation of multiple private spheres. These are spheres of connection, or overlapping networked spheres, where private individuals negotiate their relationship with the "public" (Papacharissi, 2013: 21, 162-164). Papacharissi invokes Schudson's conceptualization of the "monitorial citizen," who employs technology in order to

construct a self-determined subpolitical sphere, and Benkler's optimism for the prospect of convergent online technologies and their ability to sustain a networked public sphere, one which would connect disparate and civically-inspired networks, actors, and publics on a global scale (Ibid., 102-104). Papacharissi argues that the internet, while providing a public space, does not in itself democratize or create a public *sphere*, listing three criteria for online technology to achieve democratizing potential: access to information, reciprocity of communication, and the commercialization (or lack thereof) of online space (Ibid., 120, 124-128). Of relevance to this project, it is worth examining, in the case of Greece, where there is a history of a relatively weak and ephemeral public sphere and civil society, as well as rising mistrust in public institutions, whether the public has increasingly moved towards private spheres—or whether online tools can rejuvenate activity in the public sphere and in civil society.

Dahlgren makes a similar argument as Papacharissi, pointing out that usage of the internet for political purpose is minor compared to the many other purposes to which it is put, adding that the political discussion which often does take place online is frequently isolated and does not always promote the civil ideal. Nevertheless, the architecture of the internet does, according to Dahlgren, offer a space for many possible civic initiatives (2005: 151). Along similar lines, Bennett and Toft argue that social technologies do not provide "magic solutions" for democracy, and list three contexts where activist campaigns can form: protests, campaigns, and social forms (2009: 246-247). Castells, channeling the idea of online isolation, points out that web 2.0 tools have "caused everyone to be their own media," describing it as an unmediated "postmedia movement" that "has the capacity to overcome the media and create an event, and communicate this event …" (2012: 120-121). Castells refers to the movement of the Spanish

"Indignados" as a "rhizomatic revolution," consisting of hundreds of autonomous online and offline nodes, and a revolution that occurred primarily in citizens' minds (Ibid., 140-145).

Iosifidis and Wheeler identify two waves of academic debates regarding social media and the public sphere, where initial utopianism about the ability of social media to formulate a virtual public sphere has been supplanted by doubts over whether social media can foster the development of democratic values. Examining political movements in the Arab world, Spain, and Greece, the authors emphasize the significant role played by social media for mobilization but argue that their ability to deliver lasting political change remains in question (2015: 16).

Regarding literature relating to the Greek case, Theocharis, in a survey of 500 of Greek youth in 2008 on political participation and online postmaterialism, found that evidence from Greece suggests that the internet and social media tools can be an effective tool of political expression in countries which have weak civil societies and where young people have few opportunities for community involvement and organizational participation. Such digital tools stimulate the establishment of an informal online civil society which can potentially engage youth in social and political groups and communities (2011: 208-209, 217). Tsene analyzed the Greek media landscape from the point of view of social and civil responsibility and examined the intervention of social and online media in this sphere. Highlighting the examples of spontaneous protests which arose following the Greek forest fires of 2007, proposed legislation to grant wider tax exemptions to media owners, "bottom-up" online media initiatives such as *tvxs.gr* and Radiobubble, and the example of the "Dimiourgia, Xana!" ("Recreate Greece") political party, which was founded via new media, Tsene underlines the role that social and online media can play in a country where civil society is in an "embryonic stage" (2012: 168-170, 198-204).

From the perspective of Greek social media participants, Papathanassopoulos et al. surveyed a sample of 450 Greek Facebook users over a six month period in 2011-2012, finding that 74.9 percent of those surveyed used Facebook daily, 51.1 percent participated in one or more Facebook groups, 21.6 percent spend three hours or more per day on Facebook, 37.6 percent do not watch television on a daily basis while only 6.4 percent spend three hours or more watching television each day, while 56.7 did not purchase newspapers. The results further showed that 49.1 percent used the medium to exchange information and material relating to their interests, 13.5 percent used Facebook as a means of free speech, only 27 percent of those sampled felt that their voice was heard to a greater extent as a result of their usage of Facebook, and only 27 percent used Facebook at least occasionally as a means of protest or political complaint (2013: 28-40). Doulkeri, in a study of Facebook usage by a sample of 189 Greek university students performed in April 2011, found that 77.3 percent maintained Facebook profiles, 60.3 percent visited Facebook daily, 46.6 percent spent an hour or less per day on the site, while only 3.4 percent used Facebook for news and information purposes (2014: 410-419). Looking at examples of the usage of YouTube by Greek youth, Triliva et al. found several themes which primarily defined their lived experiences, including that of a "sacrificed generation," a blanket condemnation of society's power brokers and their mediums and messengers (2015: 412-418). Mouzakiti, in a survey of 826 Greek Twitter users over a 24-hour period, and an accompanying content analysis of popular hashtags in Greece, found the Twittersphere to be much smaller than the Facebook sphere in Greece, moderately male-dominated, and largely comprised of young adults aged 18-44 who have completed bachelors or advanced studies, with over 90 percent accessing Twitter by computer and 70 percent via smartphones (2012: 24, 63-65, 71).

Approximately 85 percent logged on multiple times per day, 90 percent used Twitter to provide commentary on current events, 70 percent to obtain news, 70 percent had used Twitter as a means of protest, 50.5 percent had responded to a call to action via Twitter, 61.1 percent stated they would use Twitter to mobilize others in the future, 50 percent viewed Twitter as a suitable medium for enacting political pressure, 60 percent as a suitable medium for self-organization and community formation, and 80 percent as a suitable medium for dialogue, while 83.1 percent reported that Twitter helped them form an opinion on certain matters and 74.5 percent stated that Twitter had helped them reevaluate a position (Ibid., 71, 75-76, 84-89, 103). What the aforementioned studies together seem to indicate, with relation to this research project, is the likely uneven impact of social networking tools in influencing public discourse in Greece—and in particular, influencing political discourse and activism, as well as offline actions of a political or civil nature. Differences seem to exist across generations and across the gender divide, while frequent social media usage does not, on its own, seem to result in increased political activity.

A major focus of the literature on Greek social media usage focused on its role in protest and social movements, in terms of helping to foster these movements, as well as in terms of disseminating information about these actions and attracting participants. In a comprehensive volume detailing the first-hand experiences of participants in the movement of the "Indignants" in Athens' Syntagma Square in 2011, several of the participants, including Giovanopoulos and Ceamor, stated that they learned about the planned protests and decided to participate as a result of the Facebook invitation that had circulated in the days prior to the launch of the movement (Ceamor, 2011: 23; Giovanopoulos, 2011b: 42). Two other participants, Papahadjis and Voulgarelis, both stated that they participated after receiving the invitation which was circulating

on Facebook, with Papahadjis noting that he had not previously been the "demonstration-going type" (Papahadjis, 2012: 160; Voulgarelis, 2012: 168). Panagiotopoulou examined the role of one of the primary websites used by the movement of the "Indignants," *real-democracy.gr*, finding that the website was one of many online tools used by the protesters, who utilized all such tools which they had at their disposal. While the internet and social media tools were not identified as a catalyst for the protest movement and were unable to, on their own, deliver upon the promise of a new political movement, these technologies provided mass publicity for the protesters, global visibility for the movement, helped those who were unaffiliated with any social and political groups to self-organize, allowed for coordination of actions across different locations and cities and the publicity of these actions, and allowed the movement to enter the mainstream news agenda (2013: 452-454). Lambrakou highlighted the Greek blogosphere as an oppositional public sphere, offering examples including the "G700" (the "700 euro generation" of highly educated, underemployed and underpaid youth, which had already arisen before the onset of the Greek financial crisis), the role of social media in fostering spontaneous protests following the widespread forest fires of the summer of 2007, the protest movement of December 2008, the initial protests in the spring of 2010 against the austerity measures following the onset of the Greek crisis, and the usage of social media and online tools by the "Indignants" in 2011. Lambrakou notes that protest movements in Greece were late adopters of new technologies, but they have been effectively used in recent years as part of a variety of movements, including the burgeoning "Den Plirono" ("I Don't Pay") movement (2011: 56-57, 72, 82-91). While these studies clearly demonstrate the important role of social networking technologies in influencing

these protest movements, the longevity of this behavior and its lasting impact on the Greek public sphere and civil society remains an open question that is of great relevance to this study.

Tsaliki closely examines two other major protest movements which have occurred in Greece in recent years: the spontaneous protests which arose following the major forest fires of the summer of 2007, and the December 2008 protests. Tsaliki begins by pointing out the inverse relationship that exists in Greece regarding age and internet use, and discusses the strong feelings of political cynicism and mistrust a majority of Greek people feel towards politicians and the political system at large (2010: 152-153). She details the SMS text message which began to circulate in Greece almost immediately following the first of the major forest fires in July 2007, calling upon citizens to converge outside of Parliament and not to remain "uninvolved," a text message which was then amplified by the Greek blogosphere (Ibid., 154). Foreshadowing the "Indignants" protests of 2011, this call to action was explicitly non-partisan, and was repeated the following month when a second wave of fires resulted in another SMS invitation circulating via text message and making its way onto the blogosphere. This message once again called upon citizens to converge outside of the Parliament building and in every public square in Greece (Ibid., 155-156). Analyzing the December 2008 protests, Tsaliki notes the significance of online technologies in mobilizing the public, but points out that the two protests should not be conflated with each other, due to the different social chain reactions at work (Ibid., 155-159).

Milioni and Panos argue that online and mobile technologies played a key role as tools of coordination and organization during the December 2008 protests in Greece. News about the shooting was transmitted almost instantaneously via mobile phone and the *Athens Indymedia* website, and the first demonstrations began within two hours. School occupations were

organized via text message, while the *Indymedia* website functioned as a coordinating hub for the various actions which were taking place. Twitter also played a key role in coordination, particularly in organizing responses to police tactics (2011: 236). The authors argue, though, that there are substantial limits to the ability of online and mobile tools to transfer the message of online alternative publics into the general public sphere (Ibid., 238). In turn, Psimitis argues that the December 2008 movement conducted an "information war" with the help of websites such as *Athens Indymedia* and the full gamut of social networking websites, ranging from Facebook to YouTube, arguing that these tools were decisive in the formation of the revolt, orchestrating an alternative public space which operated in contradiction to the mainstream media (2011a: 128-129). This "information war" and usage of online tools to distribute information could be seen as a defining moment in Greece's media history, where traditional media gatekeepers and the official public sphere were bypassed, as further evidenced by the examples before.

Papadatos-Anagnostopoulos highlighted the role that online media played in fueling the December 2008 protests in Greece. He pointed out that the death of Grigoropoulos was first reported on *Athens Indymedia* almost immediately, and that within days dozens of Facebook groups and occupation blogs had been created, which served as hubs for the protests and the student occupations of schools and university campuses (2009: 177-186). He points out, however, the emergence of far-right blogs which served as a counterweight to the protests which were occurring, the role of social media in inserting certain narratives of the protests into the mainstream media, particularly on televised satire programs, and finally, the role of social media in exposing the reasons why a photographer for a major newspaper was fired (for taking a photograph showing a police officer aiming his weapon at protesters) (Ibid., 66, 144, 186-192).

Vasilopoulos looked at the role of social media in disseminating news about the shutdown of national public broadcaster ERT in June 2013 and how technologies such as live online streaming were utilized by the employees of ERT for their protest broadcasts. The latter were propagated with the help of the Twitter hashtag *#ERT* and the digital communities which formed to protest the closure (2013: 183-185). Also on the topic of the ERT shutdown, Kiki performed multiple content analyses of the postings made on the *ERTSocial* Facebook page over an approximate one year period, noting the important role that this community played in fostering political dialogue of this issue, particularly following the initial shutdown of ERT in June and the forced eviction of employees who were occupying ERT headquarters the following November. Kiki characterized participation of ERT employees and ordinary citizens on the *ERTSocial* Facebook page as a form of social action (2014: 44-45, 159-167).

Focusing on another prominent social movement, Smyrnaios (2013) performed a content analysis of Twitter usage following a major protest which occurred on October 21, 2012 in the Skouries region of northern Greece, concerning the controversial gold mining activities taking place in the area. This has been the site of repeated protests during the years of the economic crisis in Greece, and following this particular incident, Smyrnaios conducted a content analysis of 2,713 tweets using the #skouries hashtag, posted by 466 users across a 3.5 day period from October 21 to October 25, 2012. His main conclusions were as follows: first, dissemination of information about the protest and its aftermath stemmed largely from three central Twitter accounts. This news was then disseminated to a wider audience through the re-tweets of several specific opinion leaders in the Greek Twittersphere with a significant following. Second, only one professional journalist actively participated in the online discourse involving the #skouries

hashtag on Twitter. Third, a strong presence of non-Greek users in the online discourse was found, many of whom translated the news of the protest into languages such as English and French. Fourth, Smyrnaios found that despite the efforts of numerous users to tweet news using the #skouries hashtag to mainstream media entities, these attempts were largely ineffective. Finally, Smyrnaios detected a separate sphere of discussion about the Skouries protests involving established civil society groups such as Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), who however did not actively participate in the online discourse using the #skouries hashtag.

Sioula-Georgoulea conducted a critical discourse analysis of the response of the Greek Twittersphere to the public naming of HIV-positive prostitutes who were accused of infecting multiple clients. This analysis was based on two relevant Twitter hashtags used during this controversy, and was accompanied by She noted that despite the emergence of virtual counterspheres which challenged the dominant narrative propagated by the government and by the mass media, not all of these counterspheres constituted a radical critique of the dominant discourse through the reproduction of common stereotypes and sexist rhetoric (2015: 4-8). Morikis surveyed 246 youth and young adults aged 15-35 in February 2014 to determine the relationship between their use of social networking sites and protest activity, finding that 76.2 percent used social networking sites to disseminate protest news, with Facebook being the preferred medium for this practice and with teenagers being the most skeptical of its efficacy. The main protest goals were influencing global public opinion (69 percent) and domestic politicians (52 percent), while 78.6 percent said they would only protest via social media if a real-world protest was not sufficiently substantial and 66.1 percent stated that they would never sacrifice street protesting for exclusively online protests (2014: 20-23, 26-32). A similar study

conducted by Afouxenidis (2014: 1-3) surveyed a sample of 159 unemployed university lecturers in Greece, mostly under the age of 45, who were members of an online community of unemployed academics. The survey results showed that 76 percent of members never posted political content to the group, 74 percent had never been a part of a political party, 70 percent never participated in any civil society organizations, and 46 percent had never participated in any form of collective organizing, demonstrating a low level of offline political involvement. Of those surveyed, 47 percent nevertheless stated that they were more inclined to become politically active in a public context as a result of their participation in this online community. Afouxenidis concluded that the capacity of the internet to fully foster political participation was dependent on offline political experience, plus a degree of online technical competency (Ibid., 3).

A more recent survey, the aforementioned DiaNEOsis/MRB poll of young adults and parents throughout Greece, which was conducted over a three month period in the autumn of 2016, provides an additional informative insight into the usage of social media tools for disseminating messages and content of a political or social nature. Specifically, 56.0 percent of young adults polled stated that they had publicly expressed their opinion or uploaded content pertaining to social or political issues to a social networking website such as Facebook or Twitter in the preceding 12 month period, as compared to 25.4 percent of parents polled (2017: 43).

Picking up on the topic of the reproduction of dominant narratives, Afouxenidis argues that politics and political cultures are not necessarily re-negotiated via online and social media tools, which quite often serve to instead replicate the offline world. This can occur via the reproduction of extant offline activist communities, or through the reproduction of mainstream narratives, as was the case with the supporters of the “Menoume Evropi” (“We Remain in

Europe") initiative, which opposed a "no" vote in the Greek referendum of July 2015, claiming that it would result in a Greek departure from the Eurozone (2015: 11-12). Similarly, Zarali and Frangonikolopoulos, in their content analysis and discourse analysis of five Greek news portals and five selected blogs, found that news portals mimic the televisual style of sensational news reporting, a characteristic also shared by many of the blogs that were studied, which end up reproducing the messages of the media and political system (2013: 278-283, 305-307). Similar findings were noted by Zeri in her qualitative content analysis of four selected Greek blogs during a ten-day period in 2012. While comprising a part of the virtual public sphere, Greek political blogs, regardless of ideology, reproduced extremely polarized political discourses which also predominate in Greek society (2016: 1582, 1591). Moreover, Zeri points out that political blogs constitute a small portion of the overall Greek blogosphere and have not played a decisive role in Greece's political landscape (Ibid., 1580). Touri and Kostarella examined the ability of independent blogs to expand the boundaries of public range, finding that while blogs have begun to threaten the dominance of the mainstream news media, they have developed a tendency to operate as "echo chambers," while utilizing sensational, polemical language, even for the presentation of the same news stories as the mainstream media (2016: 7-11).

A social network analysis of the Greek far-right blogosphere was performed by Smyrnaios (2013), beginning with an initial sample of 18 blogs which increased to a total sample of 88 blogs which were closely interlinked. Smyrnaios' observed that there was a very large number of far-right blogs in operation, mostly anonymously, and he posited that it is likely that despite their anonymity, the operation of so many far-right blogs belies the likely political organization and coordination of such blogs behind the scenes. These blogs were also found to

be highly insular, frequently linking to each other but rarely to mainstream news sources. They promoted a self-described "alternative" news agenda, focusing on the "real truth," "alternative news," and keeping the audience "on alert," while traditionally left-wing political rhetoric, such as "resistance," "popular sovereignty," and "anti-capitalism" was also frequently adopted. Political parties such as SYRIZA and PASOK, as well as the "troika" of Greece's lenders, were frequently the targets of these blogs. Finally, it was noted that almost all such blogs were hosted on the Blogger platform. Afouxenidis and Sioula-Georgoulea, in a content analysis of 18 far-right and nationalist websites and blogs over the course of 2015, sought to examine the extent to which "old" far-right and extremist narratives such as Nazism and national socialism are reproduced by "new" communication mediums. They found that Greek far-right websites had effectively harnessed new mediums, particularly blogs, in order to disseminate fascist or nationalist messages, as well as far-right political actions and activities (2016: 3-7, 29). Put together, the findings of the aforementioned studies indicate the potential susceptibility of the social media and blogs towards the dominant narratives of the hegemonic public sphere.

Zafiropoulos et al. classified 10 categories of participation on political blogs, including campaigning, community building, deliberation, discourse, electioneering, information provision, polling, concern creation, media and book reference, and environmental issues (2013: 44), while in another study, Zafiropoulos, in a sample developed in November 2010, employs social network analysis indexes to study 127 Greek political blogs which tagged one or more of the political parties represented in parliament, looking at bloggers' efforts to form spheres of influence. His study found that only a small percentage of the blogs studied served as "authority blogs" (with many incoming links), while most other blogs try to expand their influence by way

of many outgoing links (2012: 722-725). Zafiropoulos adds historical background information on the Greek blogosphere, noting that political blogs emerged in Greece following the forest fires of 2007 and an incident regarding the news of migrants who had been beaten in a central police station of Athens that same year; political blogs first began to exercise influence in Greek politics the following year with the December 2008 protests, and played a critical role in the sharing of information during the "Indignants" protests of 2011 (Ibid., 723). It could be said that even if the hegemonic public sphere is not replicated by blogs and social media, these technologies could foster the development of a new "elite" category of websites, pages, and users, limiting access to this new public sphere to those who are less influential.

Pleios found that in 2009, 42 percent of blogs sampled were self-classified by their owners as political blogs (2010: 87), while Karampasis conducted an early (2007) survey of 12 Greek bloggers over a one month period, with demographic results showing the then-Greek blogosphere to be male-dominated (almost two-thirds of respondents), 88 percent of bloggers falling in the 18-44 age group, and 67 percent possessing a university degree (2008: 36-37, 45-46). The survey further revealed that 85.2 percent watch television for fewer than 90 minutes per day (with television being the least-used mass medium amongst the bloggers surveyed), 52 percent referenced current events on their blogs, 51 percent did *not* consider their blogging to be a form of journalism, 54 percent stating their belief that they were *not* contributing to the public sphere, while 75 percent of those surveyed maintained anonymity on their blogs (Ibid., 50, 63-65, 71, 124). While the bloggers' reasons for maintaining anonymity were not specified, it is possible that bloggers addressing potentially controversial issues, politically those in the political

realm, may have feared that they would be at risk of being charged under Greece's strict libel and slander laws, being politically typecast, or being singled out personally or professionally.

Tsaliki and Kontogianni, in a long-term analysis of the tweets of 22 Greek elected officials and 10 other political personalities, examined their usage of Twitter, finding that social media tools are generally still unfamiliar territory for many such elected officials and candidates. Confirming this lack of sophistication, the authors noted that only a small percentage of politicians' Twitter accounts were verified, while most politicians continued their familiar pre-internet practice of using media simply as a "bulletin board" of announcements and press releases, with little to no interactivity with the broader community and with some politicians abandoning their Twitter accounts after the conclusion of their electoral campaigns. It was also pointed out that there are over 10 times more Facebook users than Twitter users in Greece (2015: 546-552, 557-559). Galani performed a content and discourse analysis of the content of two prominent Greek Twitter accounts, those of George Mouroutis and Nikos Pappas, respective advisers to the leaders of the New Democracy and SYRIZA political parties, in the period leading up to the European parliamentary elections in May 2014. Her findings confirmed the narrative of polarizing rhetoric which is characteristic of Greek politics, with most tweets consisting of personal attacks, rebuttals, and arguments, rather than emphasizing policy issues (2013: 54-64). Galani adds that Twitter is not as "mass" a medium as Facebook in Greece, while the "elite" of the Greek Twittersphere has largely replicated the offline elite (Ibid., 67-68). In an older (2008: 88-91) study by Flesoura on the usage of mobile telephony by Greek politicians as part of their campaigns, a relatively high percentage (41.3 percent) used SMS text messaging in 2004, while also finding that, as with other forms of media, Greek political candidates tended to

use text messaging as a "bulletin board" of announcements instead of in a more interactive fashion. This "bulletin board" usage of online media was further detected by Demertzis et al., in an early (2004) study which analyzed the websites of candidates in the 2004 parliamentary elections (2005: 109), and in an older study of websites of Greek and British political parties during electoral races in 2000 (Kotskikopoulou, 2002: 205). These findings reflect the highly politicized, polemic, and perhaps underdeveloped nature of the official public sphere in Greece, with these trends being transferred to an online medium.

Giannari performed a study which examined the presence of Greek mass media outlets (television stations, radio stations, newspapers) on three major social media websites (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube). The results showed that a majority of newspapers lacked a social media presence at the time of the sample, with only 17 percent of outlets maintaining a presence on all three social media websites examined, while a notable highlight was that at the time of the sample (2012), no newspapers were found to maintain a YouTube account (2012: 73-88). A similar study was previously conducted by Spyridou and Veglis, finding that most television stations, radio stations, and newspapers used at most one to three web 2.0 tools, had a low uptake of on-demand services, and had low rates of social networking site usage at the time the sample was taken. The authors concluded that Greek media outlets displayed a slow adoption rate of new digital technologies (2010: 102-112). This low adoption rate may have left an opening for upstart online media efforts and news websites to gain a foothold among Greek internet users.

Deligianni and Dimitrakopoulou undertook a detailed exploration of the Greek legal and constitutional framework as it pertains to blogging, social media, and online media. They cited several legal and constitutional protections which protect freedom of speech, the freedom of

information (the right to be informed and the right to participate in the information society), the right to privacy, the right to judicial protection, and cases where online anonymity can be legally stripped. In addition, the authors analyzed the many areas of Greek law where uncertainty exists with regard to the regulation of all forms of online media—particularly whether they should be classified under Article 15 of the Greek Constitution (concerning broadcasting), or the more liberal regime of Article 14, governing the press (2012: 89-128, 134-138, 140-154, 179-193, 198-220). The legal uncertainty that exists has, at times, resulted in controversial charges and legal battles, and may act as a "chilling effect" for individuals seeking to post potentially controversial news and information via an online medium.

Recent data from the Eurobarometer survey displayed strong indicators of the lingering digital divide in Greece and the low adaptation rate of certain digital technologies. To summarize, Greece ranked 23rd in the EU in internet usage, with 48 percent of those surveyed stating they used the internet on a daily basis. Conversely, Greece was in the middle of the rankings (15th place) in the category of daily social network usage, at 36 percent, though notably, Greece also ranked 3rd in terms of individuals who *never* used social networking sites (39 percent). One final notable statistic showed Greece in last place in the EU in terms of the percentage of citizens who watch television via the internet (two percent) (Eurobarometer 2015). Van Dijk has pointed out that aside from economic factors and the relatively lower incomes of Southern European countries, including Greece, vis-à-vis Northern and Western Europe, other potential reasons for the lower adaptation rate of new technologies in Southern Europe may include cultural factors, such as the outdoor lifestyle as well as the political context and level of democracy prevalent in these countries (2009: 292). These factors can, in turn, serve as obstacles

for the full potential of social media and online tools to robustly contribute to or rejuvenate the Greek public sphere and civil society in Greece.

Eurobarometer's findings are, however, contradicted by a survey conducted by polling firm Focus/Bari, titled "Focus on Tech Life." In this survey of a sample of 5,000 respondents nationwide during the third quarter of 2017, internet usage was measured at 81.8 percent of the overall sample, being almost universal between ages 13 and 44, 88.4 percent of whom used the internet daily (as compared to 71.0 percent of the total sample). The average period of use was 3.1 hours daily, and 4.3 hours for the 18-24 age bracket. 72.2 percent of those sampled owned a smartphone, with ownership ubiquitous up to age 34, while internet usage via smartphones was practiced by 67.7 percent of those sampled (the figure was 89.4 percent for those up to the age of 44). 64.3 percent of the sample used mobile applications on their smartphones, with 44.5 percent using social media apps, in second place overall amongst applications used behind communications applications, and followed by news applications at 26.3 percent, ahead of music applications and map/location applications. In all, 69.2 percent of households were connected to the internet in some form, with 68 percent primarily connecting via smartphone, 51.3 percent on their laptop computers, and 36 percent via desktop personal computers. Notably, 78 percent of children aged 5-12 used the internet, including 89.3 percent of 10- to 12-year-olds (2017: 1-11).

Interestingly, there is an apparent lack of research in many potential areas of study pertaining to social and new media and the Greek context, including very little work on the impact and relationship with the public sphere and/or civil society; on online media and the highly charged July 2015 referendum in Greece; on the usage of social and new media by politicians, political parties, and by traditional mass media outlets; and on the legal framework

governing online and new media, including the often controversial issue of anonymity, which has been a matter of political debate in Greece in the past.

Finally, in examining a broader non-Greek context, Lessig introduces the issue of online architecture, and how "code" can serve as the perfect regulatory tool limiting free speech in cyberspace, even in the absence of official legislation governing online speech. As Lessig argues, "[l]eft to itself, cyberspace will become a perfect tool of control…not necessarily control by government" but by an "invisible hand, pushed by government and commerce" which "is constructing an architecture that will perfect control and make highly efficient regulation possible" (2008: 4). "Architecture" can refer to anything from algorithms used to determine search results on Google or what content might appear in a user's "news feed" on Facebook, restrictions such as the character limit imposed on Twitter, or other policies and terms of service which could curtail freedoms and the ability to communicate online and via social media.

2.6.2 – Alternative, Community, and Radical Media

Alternative media is a concept which underlies many of the issues being examined in this project. In a country such as Greece, where the media landscape has long been dominated by vested political and economic interests who tightly control the flow of news and information, what role can alternatives to such mediums play in informing the Greek populace? Social and new media, as well as other online technologies (such as internet radio) can provide new spaces where alternative media outlets can develop and operate. It is therefore important to define "alternative media" and to understand how they are indeed *alternative* to traditional media.

In the body of literature and scholarly work that has developed over the years, a remarkably large number of terms and categorizations have been utilized in an attempt to name

and to pin down the category of media outlets and productions that is often described as "alternative" or "activist" media.[5] Overall, the most commonly used terms for such media outlets are "alternative media," "radical media," "citizens' media," and "community media." While there is much overlap between these terms and the manner in which they have been defined by scholars, for the purposes of this dissertation, the term "alternative media" will be used.

According to Atton, alternative media are found outside mainstream media institutions, and can include the media of protest groups, dissidents, fringe political groups, or even fans and hobbyists (2007: 17-18). They tend not to be produced by professionals, but by amateurs operating in their capacities as citizens, members of communities, activists, or fans (Ibid). A great deal of the work of such outlets is devoted to the representation of the views, interests, and needs of underrepresented groups in society, in an attempt to counterbalance disparities in media power in the mainstream media, exhibiting clear biases and eschewing "balanced" or "objective" reporting (Ibid., 18; Atton, 2004: 39). Atton adds that such outlets are also typically organized in non-mainstream ways, including in non-hierarchical or collective setups, and usually operate on a non-commercial basis, insulated from market and state forces (2004: 3), posing a challenge to professional and institutionalized norms seen in the mainstream media (Ibid., 26).

Bailey et al. offer their own detailed definition and conceptualization of alternative media, arguing that its definition should include a wider spectrum of media that are working to democratize information and communication (2008: 5). The authors present four theoretical

[5] This terminology includes "alternative media," "radical media," "citizens' media," "activist media," "community media," "third-sector media," "social movement media," "oppositional media" (or "media in opposition [to]"), "non-commercial" or "non-profit" media, "advocacy media," "minority media," "grassroots media," "independent media," "non-mainstream media," "non-professional media," "participatory media," "amateur media," "alterative media," "media from below," "volunteer media," "volunteer journalism," among many others. Often, composite or derivative terms, such as "radical alternative media," are used.

approaches which attempt to locate alternative media's place in society, whether in terms of their target audience or what they are alternative *to*, as well as the linkages of such media to civil society, which is of direct relevance to this research project. In the authors' first approach, alternative media are seen as serving a community, whether it is a geographical/spatial community, or an interpretative community or community of meaning (Carpentier et al., 2003: 54). The second approach views alternative media as an alternative to mainstream media, in that they are small-scale, oriented towards specific communities and potentially marginalized societal groups; operate independently from the state and the market; are horizontally structured and facilitate audience participation and access; and transmit non-dominant and possibly counter-hegemonic discourses and representations (Ibid., 56). The third approach links alternative media to civil society through organizations which, due to their democratized nature, permit citizens to be active through micro-participation while acting as the "third voice" between state and commercial media, thus serving a crucial role for the overall viability of democracy (Bailey et al., 2008: 23). This approach resembles the conceptualization of civil society as the "third sector" between the state and the private sphere. The authors caution, however, introduce a caveat: in a top-down conceptualization of civil society, dominant forces have the ability to co-opt elements of popular movements (Ibid., 22). Bearing similarities to Castells' concept of a "rhizomatic revolution," the authors' fourth approach views alternative media as a "rhizome," a non-linear, anarchic, and nomadic entity, in which any point within the network can be connected to any other point, while the rhizome itself is constantly in flux. Such outlets are viewed as operating with a high degree of contingency (where what may be considered "alternative" at one point in time can become "mainstream" at another point in time) and building linkages between civil

society and other alternative media organizations (Ibid.: 25-29). Carpentier et al. argue that there is no one correct way of defining alternative media, but that the combination of these four approaches paints a "panoptic picture" that takes account of the multiplicity, diversity, and fluidity of alternative media (Ibid., 150). Together, these four approaches provide a basis for better understanding what alternative media are alternative in comparison *to*, what other societal entitles they may be linked to, as well as their ability to metamorphosize, to "become mainstream" or to adopt dominant discourses, or to exist only ephemerally.

Other scholars have offered their own interpretations of alternative media. Atkinson argues that media are deemed to be "alternative" if they adhere to one of three definitions that have been established in prior media studies literature: alternative content, interpretative strategies utilized by their audience to read such media, and alternative production that is independent of corporate media interests and which often occurs under conditions of economic duress (2010: 22). Couldry and Curran define alternative media as "media production that challenges, at least implicitly, actual concentrations of media power, whatever form those concentrations may take in different locations" (2003: 7). Forde argues that "alternative" is the only term which encompasses all other kinds of terminology that is frequently used to describe such media, including radical, grassroots, citizens', and independent media, while characterizing alternative journalists as "amateur media producers," typically lacking in professional training or qualifications (2011: 6). Harcup adds that the production of alternative and participatory forms of media can be seen as an example of active citizenship (2011: 26-27), while Haas, noting that an all-encompassing definition of alternative media is impossible, states that they could be seen as media "devoted to providing representations of issues and events which oppose those offered in

the mainstream media," which advocate for political and social reform, and which constitute either an alternative public sphere, or a sphere of multiple alternative publics (2004: 115). These definitions of alternative media add greater depth to the many dimensions of "alternativeness" which can potentially be found in such mediums, including the relationship of alternative media to the idea of citizenship—itself a vital component of the public sphere and civil society.

Despite the common usage of the term alternative media, it has also been problematized by several scholars. Downing et al. (2001) wrote that the term is "almost oxymoronic," because "everything, at some point, is alternative to something else" (2001: ix). Interestingly, in one paper, Atton (2002b), who has otherwise favored the usage of the term alternative media, employs the term "radical media" in its stead. The usage of the term "radical media" is most often associated with Downing, who argues that such media are the media of social movements, and which express an alternative vision to hegemonic policies, priorities, and perspectives (Downing et al., 2001: v-xi). They are generally small-scale in nature, typically underfunded, sometimes unnoticed or short-lived, express opposition from a subordinate position targeted directly at the power structure, and build support, solidarity, and networking against the policies of or even the very survival of the power structure. They also tend to be at least somewhat more democratic in terms of their internal structure than mainstream media, and may include a wide variety of formats and styles (Ibid., xi). Downing also proffers some caveats, including the existence of "radical" media which could represent regressive or far-right political and societal forces, and challenges that radical media broadly face, such as the "price of participation" (including printing costs) which may limit the ability of such outlets to survive (Ibid., 50-51, 88-91). Case studies presented by Downing of alternative media outlets in Italy (such as Radiopop)

and Portugal—two countries which also comprise Hallin and Mancini's "Polarized Pluralist" or "Mediterranean" model, as is Greece, examined the ephemerality of some such outlets as their participants shifted to other forms of activism or were co-opted by political or other forces, while professional journalists stifled by editorial controls at the outlets where they were employed developed a peculiar symbiosis with such radical mediums, feeding them news stories that would not otherwise be published. Even if they are short-lived though, Downing highlights how the experience of participating in such ventures can help foster a "generational resurgence" in the future (Downing, 1984: 273-282, 354; Downing et al., 2001: 16, 186, 280-281, 288).

Notably, however, in one journal article, Downing (2003) employs the term "alternative media" instead of "radical media." Radical media as a concept has also been problematized, as Atton has argued that Downing's model remains limited by its emphasis on social movements and does not consider other potential purposes of alternative media which may ignore "weaker" communicative mediums ranging from personal websites to zines (2002: 20-21). Nevertheless, this emphasis on the media of social movements is relevant to the case of Greece, and the usage of various media forms (including social media) by various protest movements, and activist and social groups. However, it can be argued that a medium can be "alternative" without representing a social movement or activist effort.

Rodríguez also problematizes this notion, writing that it entraps us in a binary notion of power and misses the myriad of power equations which exist in the community, which are not static but constantly shifting and changing (2001: 16-17). She proposes the abandonment of the terms alternative media and radical media and, instead, the adoption of the term "citizens' media." She argues that the term citizens' media implies that a collectivity is enacting its

citizenship through its active intervention and transformation of the existing mediascape; that such media contest social codes, legitimized identities, and institutionalized social relations; and that these media practices empower the community involved, to the point where transformations and changes are possible beyond the realm of the media (Ibid., 20). They may have short life-cycles and are often fragmented and improvised in nature (Ibid., 22), and they are at risk of being corrupted and co-opted by their funding sources or by dependencies on central authorities, while communication technology itself is always at risk of being overtaken by commercial interests. The author highlighted the example of underpaid citizens' media practitioners in Colombia and the propensity for them to be co-opted by financial interests (Ibid., 55, 183). Citizens' media can exist in both indigenous and non-indigenous societies (Ibid., 27-47). The notion of citizens' media has nevertheless also been viewed as problematic, seen as a term that cannot avoid the connotation of inclusion or exclusion based on one's citizenship status, while it has been pointed out that the term "citizen" or "citizenship" may have different meanings, or multiple meanings, in non-western and/or authoritarian societies (Al-Ghazzi, 2014: 443-449). It can be argued that while citizens' media can and is likely to be "alternative" to hegemonic media outlets, alternative media does not necessarily have to operate as citizens' media.

Several scholars choose instead to use the term "community media." Rennie describes community media as media that allow for access and participation, usually run on a not-for-profit basis, providing community members with an opportunity to participate in the production process, while varying greatly in their structures, financial health, and target audiences (2006: 3, 22). Howley presents community media as "popular and strategic interventions into contemporary media culture committed to the democratization of media structures, forms, and

practices," assuming different forms and meanings depending on the needs of the community and the resources available at a particular time and place, while typically relying on noncommercial forms of support, with a less hierarchical structure than corporate and public service media, and often entering into an alignment with counter-hegemonic struggles (2005: 2-3; 2010: 2-4). Jankowski refers to community media as encompassing a diverse range of mediated forms of communication, providing news and information relevant to the needs of community members, engaging these members in public communication via the community medium, empowering those who are disenfranchised politically, producing locally-oriented and locally-made content, essentially non-commercial in nature, with ownership and control often shared by community residents, local governmental institutions, and community-based organizations (2002: 6-8). Lowrey, Brozana and Mackay refer to "community news media" as media that reveal or make individuals aware of resources, institutions, events or ideas that may be shared, and which encourage such sharing, and which also facilitate the process of negotiating and creating the meaning of "community" (Lowrey et al., 2008: 288), while Meadows describes community media as media produced in an environment where strong connections to either a local community or a community of interest exist, and where the relationship between audiences and producers plays a crucial role, arguing that the term "community" can encompass terms such as "radical," "alternative," "participatory," "citizen" and "grassroots" (2013: 44-45). These conceptualizations of community media are based on definitions of the term "community" which may refer to geography (place) and/or ethnicity as its structuring notion, or which may refer to such non-geographical definitions as "communities of interest," "communities of practice," "virtual communities," "interpretative communities," "imagined communities," or "communities

of meaning" (Bailey et al.., 2008: 8-10). Similarly to "citizens' media" though, this term also can be said to possess shortcomings. While "community media" may potentially act as alternatives to dominant mediums within a society, via their targeting of specific communities, it can be argued that "alternative" media does not necessarily have to target particular communities or groups. Indeed, these conceptualizations have not escaped critique either. Downing views the term "community" as a catch-all with a localist sense, a professional sense, a sense of community standards of decency, and/or a nostalgic sense: "politically fuzzy" words that "urgently need anchoring" (Downing et al., 2001: 38). It has also been argued that the term community takes on many different meanings depending on place and culture (Meadows et al., 2010: 163-164).

Also significant is Lievrouw's extensive analysis of how alternative and activist media, as she describes such outlets, can experience cycles of "capture and co-optation" as well as subversion, or a "war" between "uploading and downloading," while introducing the competing "pipeline" ("center") and "frontier" ("edge") visions of the internet, which could broadly be summarized as top-down and bottom-up notions of media and cultural production in the online sphere (2011: 2-3). Lievrouw notes that this continual process of co-optation may leave no authentic or independent space for genuine cultural expression separate from the market, with members of subcultural groups often acting as willing participants in this process (Ibid, 82-83).

Academic literature on alternative, radical, or community media in Greece is particularly limited. As is the case with much of the global literature on alternative media, one of the pre-eminent scholarly articles on this topic with relation to the Greek context has to do with the activities of the Independent Media Center, or *Indymedia,* which maintains a presence in Greece. Milioni uses *Indymedia Athens* as a case study to examine the capability of such an online,

alternative media outlet to contribute to the online counter-public sphere, including the network structure of *Indymedia* and its ability to act as a global network for collective action. Very little is discussed regarding its place within the Greek (alternative) media landscape (Milioni, 2009). Gazi and Boubouka authored one of the few scholarly articles which exclusively examines an "alternative" media outlet, highlighting the case of online radio station Radiobubble and the station's official Twitter hashtag, *#rbnews*. The authors analyzed how Radiobubble managed its participatory visibility through content production in Twitter and through the use of its hashtag, while analyzing the content of its tweets. However, the content of Radiobubble*'s* radio programming was not analyzed or discussed in detail (Gazi & Boubouka: 2015). Radiobubble is one of the five illustrative examples examined in this research project.

Siapera et al., in their examination of what they term "post-crisis journalism" in Greece, highlight several online news media outlets as providers of alternative journalism and which have implemented an alternative organizational and production model that is antagonistic to the dominant ideology. These outlets include the daily newspaper *Efimerida ton Syntakton*, which is collectively run; the magazine *Unfollow* (which is also collectively run); the news website *The Press Project*; Radiobubble; and Infowar Productions, which produces crowdsourced journalism and documentaries. The authors highlight the investigative journalism practiced by many of these outlets, and the bottom-up nature of their operations (2015: 459). In a similar study, Tsene examines new online media outlets which are products of the ongoing economic crisis in Greece, referencing *The Press Project* and Radiobubble, in addition to news portal *tvxs.gr* and online activist and civil society initiatives such as *100myria.gr* and *deb8.gr* (2012: 169-170, 198-204).

In this research project, representatives from all of the aforementioned outlets were interviewed on an individual basis or, in the case of Radiobubble, as one of the five illustrative examples.

Bouka examines the activist efforts which followed the June 2013 shutdown of national public broadcaster ERT and the launch of the worker-run ERT Open. Specifically, this paper highlighted the role of ERT Open as an alternative media outlet, standing in opposition to the "black screens" imposed by the government, while describing the self-organized and collective structure of ERT Open, the experimental nature of its broadcasts, and its role in furthering the protests and social movement which arose calling for the re-establishment of a truly public and independent national broadcaster (2015: 27, 30, 33, 45, 59-62). This could be said to be an example of the rhizomatic model in *reverse*, where a previously dominant media outlet was transformed, literally overnight, into an "alternative" media outlet. Finally, both Smyrnaios (2009: 155) and Nevradakis (2014d) approach the issue from an economic and from a legal perspective and address the difficulties independent and alternative media outlets face regarding entry in the existing Greek media marketplace, from a legal and economic point of view.

For the purposes of this research project, the term "alternative media," and the broad range of definitions and approaches utilized by the aforementioned scholars who have chosen to employ this terminology, will be most frequently adopted. Adopting the argument put forth by Forde (2011: 6), the term "alternative media" is, in my estimation, more inclusive than "radical media," "community media," or "citizens' media." "Alternative" media does not necessarily need to be socially or politically radical or to adopt "radical" positions, nor does any one specific "community" necessarily need to be targeted by an "alternative" media outlet. Moreover, "alternative" media outlets could presumably be staffed by professional paid journalists, or at the

very least by journalists and media practitioners who possess professional training and experience. Many of the media outlets which were examined as part of this project, particularly through individual interviews, are best classified under the "alternative media" umbrella, as compared to the other two terms, as it can be said that they operate as general "alternatives" to the country's traditional press titles, television stations, and news-talk radio stations.

2.6.3 – Summing up Research on the Alternatives to Mainstream Media

The preceding section has provided definitions of social media, blogs, and alternative media that will be used to guide this research project. It has also analyzed the extant literature in the areas of social and new media; as well as alternative, radical, citizens' and community media; collectively grouped for the purposes of this literature review as alternatives to mainstream, traditional media forms. This literature has examined the myriad ways in which alternative media indeed act as "alternatives" to dominant media forms and practices, and the manner in which social and new media, including blogs, can themselves operate as alternative mediums and contribute to social, political, activist, and protest movements.

While much literature exists which has examined how social and new media tools such as Facebook and Twitter were utilized during moments of protest and social upheaval in Greece (with a particular focus on the December 2008 protests and the protests of the "Indignants" in the spring and summer of 2011), very little of that research has connected this social and new media usage to its potential broader impacts on the Greek public sphere or Greek civil society. The usage of social media in certain significant moments in Greece's recent history, such as the shutdown of national public broadcaster ERT in June 2013 or in the days leading up to the July 2015 referendum, is also conspicuously lacking. The same can be said about the social media

activity surrounding certain specific activist causes in Greece, such as the highly unpopular and controversial gold mining activities taking place in the environmentally sensitive northern Greek region of Skouries. These will be focus areas of this research project.

In terms of literature pertaining to alternative, community, and radical media, there is a surprisingly small amount of research pertaining to the growth and development of such outlets during the years of the economic crisis in Greece, and the manner in which such outlets are indeed serving as "alternatives" to the incumbent mainstream media outlets. In the present research study being performed, both individual interviews and the five illustrative examples have focused extensively on such "alternative" media outlets, and how exactly they might serve as "alternatives" in Greece's media and news landscape.

2.7 – Social Movements and Protests

In this subsection, my review of literature on social movements and protests does not profess to be all-encompassing, as a full review would be beyond the scope of this research project. Initially, selected literature on global social movements will be examined, which will allow the protests and conflicts seen in Greece in recent years to be located within a global framework. Following this, relevant literature on the Greek case will be examined, with a primary emphasis on identifying the gaps which exist in the body of research with regard to Greek social and protest movements that have not been examined, and the potential impact of social and online media in Greek social movements, protests, and activist causes.

2.7.1 – Protests and Social Movements in Greece

Several authors have highlighted the increasingly worse conditions of political, economic, and social inequality in the Western world in recent years as a prelude to the protest

movements which have taken place in the United States and many European countries, including Greece. As early as 1995, Dahlgren noted that citizens in the Western world were increasingly withdrawing from the political sphere, with democracy often viewed as a choice amongst a "rotation of elites"—a situation which Dahlgren argued was breeding contemporary social movements (1995: 2-5). This view is mirrored by Purcell, who identifies the growth of neoliberalism since the 1970s as a direct factor in the global economic recession which began in 2007 via the naturalization of austerity politics and the lack of any alternatives presented following the collapse of the Soviet Union (2013: 4-9). This has resulted in an expression of "popular power from below," via the mobilization against neoliberal policies and austerity measures (Ibid., 9-13, 168-169). Mann argues that these mass mobilizations reflect deeply global forces responding to growing inequality and the delegitimization of both political institutions and traditional civil society organizations such as trade unions (2012: 182-189). In his listing of four categories of civil society actors, Castells includes democratic social movements (which aim to control the process of globalization via oppositional political action), and the global movement of public opinion, through which spontaneous and ad hoc mobilizations via horizontal and autonomous networks of communication have emerged (2008: 85-87). He highlights such movements, including those recently seen in Tunisia, Iceland, Egypt, Spain, and in the United States, as a "new breed" of networked movements, and lists 10 common characteristics of such movements: they are networked in multiple forms, they occupy urban space, they are simultaneously local and global, they generate their own form of time ("timeless time"), they are usually triggered by a spark of indignation, they are viral, they are leaderless and deliberate in the space of autonomy, they create "togetherness," they are highly self-reflective, they are non-

violent, they are rarely programmatic, they are aimed at changing societal values, and they are fundamentally political (2012: 12-14, 221-228). These characteristics can also be applied to the Greek case, and to the protest movements borne out of Greece's economic crisis.

Greece has a very long history of protest, and many of these movements have been connected to the media forms which were available at the time. During the students' uprising against the military junta at the Athens Polytechnic University in 1973, pirate radio was employed to spread the message of resistance (Rigou, 2010: 44-45; Zaharopoulos & Paraschos, 1993: 11). Leontidou points out that Greek society has been marked by its propensity for spontaneous social movements despite being regarded as having a "weak" civil society (2015: 86). Major student protests during 1985-86, 1990-91, 1995, and 1998-99, protests against the visit of United States president Bill Clinton in 1999, widespread protests against the United States' invasion of Iraq in 2003, and further student protests and occupations in 2007 set the stage for the movements which developed during the years of crisis in Greece (Karamichas, 2009: 291-292; Papadatos-Anagnostopoulos, 2009: 31, 54-56, 178; Psimitis, 2011a: 114-115). Close emphasizes the tradition of successful environmental protests and movements in Greece from the 1970s until the present day (2014: 56-57). Tzaliki highlights the spontaneous protests which arose in the summer of 2007 in response to two destructive forest fires and perceived government inaction after a call sent out via text message and Greek blogs, pointing out though that these protests did not translate into political change in the parliamentary elections which followed that autumn (2010: 155-157). Tsene highlights the role citizens played in leading the protests following the fires, which even influenced national public broadcaster ERT to organize volunteer efforts in the aftermath of the disaster (2012: 104, 169-170).

Karamichas examined the fierce social movement which followed the shooting death of Grigoropoulos in December 2008, describing it as the most intense social crisis in the post-junta democratic history of Greece, and as the "straw that broke the camel's back," unleashing pent-up anger towards the police, the political system, worsening economic conditions, and the fires of 2007 (2009: 289-290). Karamichas cites two main factors for the protests: structural deficiencies in the Greek economy and educational system, and memetics/rites of passage, as the current generation of youth reproduced the rebellions of its predecessor generations (Ibid., 291-292). Milioni further highlights this point, citing the role of the previous year's student protests as a key factor in the participation of high school students in the events of December 2008, as well as the exclusion from the official sphere that participants in the protests on a broader level were experiencing (2011: 234). Papadatos-Anagnostopoulos highlights the many political scandals which had impacted the then-government without lasting consequence, the entry of the far-right into the televised public sphere, a longstanding decline in political interest and delegitimization of the country's institutions as factors which fueled the uprising, as the author described the events (2009: 42, 45, 52-56, 59-69). Kavoulakos and Gritzas pointed out the lasting influence of the December 2008 protests, citing the 25 major protests which took place between February 2010 and February 2012 in Greece and the development of new alternative social groups (2015: 339-341). In turn, Psimitis describes the mass demonstrations which took place in the spring of 2010 against the austerity plans of the then-government as an example of new features of collective action in Greece, in which neighborhood committees and citizen assemblies quickly organized to resist the austerity measures and to claim public areas, with the participation of many individuals who were not organized as part of previously entrenched civil society actors

such as trade unions (2011b: 195). Together, this body of research addresses key incidents in Greece's recent history leading up to the country's economic crisis, which also set the stage for the social movements and protest movements which developed during the crisis years.

Several first-hand accounts of participants in the movement of the "Indignants" highlight the motivations and goals of the movements, and the factors which led citizens to join and to protest. Giovanopoulos and Mitropoulos attributed the movement to the increasing distance of the political sphere and the economic elite from the increasingly marginalized populace, and noted that the term "indignants" was chosen accidentally by the movement instead of "outraged," even though the former had been used by conservative groups in the past. They noted the lack of dialogue which followed the December 2008 protests and the different social climate which formed after the forced end of the "Indignants" movement, cautioning, however, that the occupation of public squares did not replace previous modes of mobilization (2011: 11-18). Ceamor was attracted to the protest due to the lack of partisan labels and maintained her presence there due to its peaceful and cultural nature, despite concerns that such promises would not be genuine (2011: 23-25). Stavrou drew parallels between the protests which were organized following the forest fires of 2007, and the celebratory street gatherings which followed Greece's surprise victory in the Euro 2004 soccer championship, noting the self-organization and self-regulation of both public gatherings, with the mass of participants "setting the norms." He added that it had been a very long time since so many disparate people had congregated for a common cause in Greece, while arguing that the often-repeated division between the protesters who congregated in the "upper" and "lower" parts of Syntagma Square was a "myth," as was the claim that Greek protesters only took to the streets after a banner appeared at the "Indignados"

protests in Spain, warning the protesters not to awaken the "slumbering" Greeks who had not yet arisen (2011: 31-37). Mitropoulos focused on the role of the protest's popular assemblies, which congregated daily, set the tone for the movement from the beginning with calls for "direct democracy" (instead of the "true democracy" demands of the Spanish "Indignados"), the egalitarian nature of participation in the assemblies and lack of a "media representative" for the movement, and the rejection of attempts by student organizations and other groups to co-opt the assembly (2011: 61-62, 65-67). A participant identified as "Christina L." cited the people's lack of faith in the political and economic system to handle the crisis and the increased number of people questioning their political identities as factors which resulted in the protest, while highlighting the creation of alternative economic initiatives such as the "Time Bank of Athens" as a result of the protest movement (2011: 75-77, 82). Kosmatopoulos sought to debunk common myths about the "Indignants," including that the movement was apolitical, spontaneous, and a large mass; that there was a divide between the "upper" and "lower" squares, that it was merely a copy of the Spanish "Indignados" and that the movement was favorably treated by the mass media (2011: 128-133). Rinaldi said that the movement brought to the forefront many people who were no longer being represented by the political system, also minimized the divide between the "upper" and "lower" squares, the unifying sentiment against the mass media which existed among participants, and cited the political results the movement delivered, including an unprecedented political crisis and the near-collapse of the then-government (2011: 191-193). Giovanopoulos noted that prior calls to congregate at Syntagma Square earlier in 2011, which had failed, pointing out that the appeal of the "Indignants" movement stemmed from the new communications mediums which were utilized to organize the protest. He cited the development

and operation of the movement's communications team, their desire to protect the image and coverage of the movement on its own terms, the lack of a "public representative" for the movement, the challenges that were faced (including the loss of the *real-democracy.gr* website), and the need for "netroots"—or the connection of the virtual and real-life spheres (2011a: 245, 254-259, 263-264). Voulgarelis stated that this was only the second time he had participated in a social movement, but like most protesters, he disapproved of the "unfair" tax system and quality of Greece's institutions. Such sentiments indicated that the movement was not just political in nature, but social and economic as well. Voulgarelis noted that the "Indignants" movement directly contributed to the collapse of the Papandreou government in November 2011, and added that on a personal level, the movement strongly influenced his transformation into an "active citizen" (2012: 167, 171-173). Finally, Papahadjis stated that he felt at ease in the non-partisan atmosphere of the movement, noted that many participants in the popular assemblies were speaking in public for the first time, and highlighted the legacy of popular assemblies which continued after the "Indignants" movement ceased (2012: 160-161, 167).

In a Kapa Research survey of 1,014 individuals conducted in December 2010, it was found that 29 percent of adult respondents in Greece had participated in protests that year and two-thirds supported the protests, with participants stemming from the "heart" of Greek society, including the fully employed, and those who are married or not highly educated, which were cited as signs that the anti-austerity protests lacked the typical characteristics of "new social movements" as defined by the relevant literature (Rüdig and Karyotis, 2014: 499, 509). A two-part Kapa Research survey, with an initial sample of 643 individuals participants in the "Indignants" movement and a second sample of 1,208 individuals nationwide (including protest

participants) confirmed the above findings, showing participants representing a varied cross-section of social and demographic groups. Societal schisms were nevertheless evident, as 44.2 percent of protest participants stated their desire for the formation of a new political party, as opposed to 30% of the total sample (Real.gr, 2011). Sotirakopoulos and Sotiropoulos identified the petty bourgeois and the middle class as the dominant class present in the "Indignants" movement, its calls for direct democracy, and a "diagonal dichotomy" between the "patriotic bloc" of protesters in the "upper square," and a "left-wing bloc" focused on issues of social justice in the "lower square" (2013: 447-450). Zargani highlighted the political targets of the "Indignants," their reasons for protesting, and their protest repertoire (2012: 52-56, 67-70).

Contogeorgis stated that the Greek public was not consulted about the austerity measures before they were enacted and that they were illegitimate as a result (2013: 127). He cited the December 2008 protests as an uprising against the political system, particularly by youth who bypassed the partisan system, but one which was a trap, as it provided the impetus for the government to impose harsher law enforcement tactics (2012: 114-116, 121-123), while arguing that the "Indignants" movement was doomed to failure as a result of the repetition of old practices and the insistence to remain in Syntagma Square (Ibid., 150). His article which proposed a peaceful but prolonged blockade of the Parliament building as a strong showing of civil society's determination was largely overlooked in Greece, but was said to have influenced the Spanish "Indignados" in the drafting of their manifesto (2013: 268).

In a study conducted by Loukidou (2014) where 50 NGOs in Greece's second-largest city, Thessaloniki, were surveyed, 25 percent stated that they had participated in the "Indignant" movement, a finding mirrored by Vathakou, who identified many social movements which

emerged out of the "Indignant" protests (2015: 167). Pantazidou highlighted the role of a category of these movements, open neighborhood assemblies, with over 30 such assemblies active in Athens alone, pressuring local authorities, solving local residents' problems and serving as local-level resistance to national policies—with an overall increase in the number of citizens involved in "disruptive" actions throughout Greece (2013: 764-767). Together, these accounts and findings highlight the motivations and factors cited by individuals who chose to participate in the major protest movement of the "Indignants," the potentially important role of social and online media in these protests, and their potential role in breeding new civil society initiatives.

Understanding the manner in which the mainstream media covered these protests is key in order to be able to analyze and understand the role played by social, new, and alternative media in disseminating news and information about these protests, and how their coverage may have differed. Several scholars examined the press and media coverage of the "Indignants." Kyriakidou and Osuna, in a thematic analysis of press coverage of the movements in Greece and Spain in four newspapers between May and August 2011, found press coverage was generally favorable towards the protesters, particularly due to the mass media's focus on the nonviolent and apolitical nature of the protests, the role of social media, and a human-interest focus on the individual stories of participants (2014: 213-216). Chrisanthakopoulou, in a content analysis of the protest coverage of six major Greek newspapers in 2011, found that the stance of the Greek press towards the protesters depended upon the ideological lean of the paper, with the center-right and the left expressing generally positive views and the center-left generally negative views (a center-left government was in power at the time) with no overall tendency to marginalize the protesters, who were shown as being non-violent and non-confrontational, while the political

character of the protests was minimized (2013: 51, 67-68, 79, 84, 111-112). Filippopoulos, in his own content analysis of 141 newscasts and 250 news reports on four major Greek television stations in the week immediately following the launch of the protests, also found coverage of the protesters to have been mostly positive, with the exception of public broadcaster ERT, while the apolitical and non-partisan aspects were emphasized (2013: 31-32, 57, 65-66, 91-93, 100-103).

Bouka noted the extensive solidarity campaign which followed ERT's closure, with a societal cross-section of participants ranging from labor unions to students, with calls for "real democracy" which drew upon the legacy of the "Indignants" (2015: 25-26, 30-33), while Frangiskou noted that the hopes that followed the ERT protests for the formation of a new type of participatory, inclusive media in Greece went unrealized (2015: 487-489).

Finally, the previously mentioned diaNEOsis/MRB survey of young adults and parents, conducted nationally in the autumn of 2016, provides one additional notable insight regarding participation in protests and social movements. In this poll, 34.5 percent of 18-35 year olds surveyed stated that they had participated in public protests and demonstrations sometime in the preceding 12 months, compared with 22 percent of parents polled (2017: 43).

2.7.2 – Summing up Research on Social Movements and Protests

The review of literature in the preceding subsection located recent Greek protest and social movements in a global context, social conditions which existed in Greece leading up to the years of the economic crisis and the later development of the "Indignants" movements, which serves as the starting point for this research project, and highlighted the numerous gaps and deficiencies which can be found in the existing body of literature.

It is surprising to see that more research has not been published on the movement of the "Indignants" and its impact and legacy, as well as its usage of social and new media. Certainly compared to the counterpart protests of the Spanish "Indignados," or other protest movements which took place around the globe during that same period, there is much less literature which has studied the Greek case. There is also a dearth of research on the protest movements which have followed since then in Greece, including the protests surrounding the closure of national public broadcaster ERT in June 2013, the demonstrations prior to the July 2015 austerity referendum, or on ongoing social and activist movements, such as the protests organized in opposition to gold mining activities in the Skouries region. Even much of the existing research on social movements and protests in Greece has not provided more than a cursory look at how these movements may have utilized or implemented social and new media in their operations.

Finally, there is also little, if any, research on how social and new media may have contributed to the formation of new political movements and parties in Greece, to the growth in popularity of existing and previously minor parties such as SYRIZA (which, since January 2015, has co-governed Greece), or their impact in the sharp electoral decline of previously incumbent political parties such as New Democracy and PASOK. This research project will take a broader look at the relationship between social movements in Greece and social and new media during the years of the economic crisis, as well as the potential impact of social and new media in Greece's political and electoral landscape.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 – INTRODUCTION

This research project employs a multimethodological approach[6], combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. Qualitative methods are useful for discovering and deciphering socially constructed meanings, differing views and values, and varying perceptions and understandings of the same events or concepts. They provide detailed descriptions of the topical and cultural arenas being examined, while qualitative methods are also valued for their contribution to the analysis of quantitative data (Lindlof, 2011: 7; Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 34).

The qualitative methods employed include interviews (both individual interviews and interviews as part of the illustrative examples), plus historical-descriptive methods. The quantitative aspect of this research consists of data garnered from electronic survey questionnaires which were sent to three sample populations. The quantitative portion of this project provides the opportunity to closely examine select populations which are relevant to the overall study as a point of comparison to the themes and trends which may emerge out of the interview process.

This study approximates a longitudinal study in two important ways. First, several of the same individuals, particularly within the context of the five exemplary illustrative examples, have been interviewed twice, towards the beginning of the period studied and again towards the end of this period. Second, the overall duration of this project, spanning from November 2012 to August 2017 and covering the time period between the protests of the "Indignants" in the spring and summer of 2011 until August 2017, allows a wide range of social and political developments

[6] Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for human subjects research was initially granted by The University of Texas' Office of Research Support on December 14, 2012 (study number 2012-11-0041). Continuing review on an annual basis, while amendments to questionnaires and other research documentation have been filed as necessary.

to be captured and to be reflected in the data that was collected. This enables the identification of particular trends or changes over the period of time covered by this research, and significantly, this is a time period which is marked by both a protracted economic crisis and by significant change in Greece's political and electoral landscape.

The primary sources of data for this study are individual interviews, the five illustrative examples of focus organizations and interviews conducted from members of each organization, and surveys (conducted electronically), in addition to contextual information provided via the historical-descriptive analysis.

3.2 – Research Questions, Categories and Object of Analysis

The objective of this research project is to examine the role of social and new media in the potential rejuvenation of Greece's public sphere and civil society during the years of the financial crisis, and specifically between May 2011 and August 2017, with on-the-ground research occurring through most of this time. This period was selected as it spans begins at the time of the widespread protests of the "Indignants" in Athens and cities throughout Greece (in the spring and summer of 2011). This was a period which saw several changes in government, a significant alteration of the country's electoral landscape, the rise of two new political parties to power, the prolonged deepening of the country's economic crisis, and several protest and activist movements. The timeline below displays some of the most significant moments in Greece's recent history, while the various stages of research activity and data collection that were performed for this project are indicated with bold text:

Table 2: Timeline of Recent Events in Greece and Research Stages

May-July 2011	"Indignants" protest movement throughout Greece
June 2011	Mid-term austerity agreement passed by Greek parliament
February-March 2012	Second memorandum agreement and further austerity measures passed, major protests in Greece
May 6, 2012	Parliamentary elections, no clear winner emerges
June 17, 2012	Follow-up parliamentary elections, New Democracy-PASOK-Democratic Left coalition government formed June 20, 2012
September-October 2012	**Arrival in Greece. Initial development of research questionnaires for individual interviews and illustrative examples**
November 2012-November 2013	**Individual interviews and initial interviews of illustrative examples conducted**
June 11, 2013	National public broadcaster ERT shut down, followed by protests throughout Greece
December 2013-April 2014	**Initial development of survey questionnaire**
April-May 2014	**Pilot study conducted, to test survey questionnaire**
June-November 2014	**Preparation work for survey. Revisions to questionnaire, identification and selection of final sample populations**
May 25, 2014	European parliamentary elections, local and regional elections. SYRIZA finishes in first place in the European parliamentary race.
December 1 2014-March 15 2015	**Survey conducted via electronic questionnaire**
January 25, 2015	Snap Greek parliamentary elections. SYRIZA emerges victorious, forms coalition government with Independent Greeks.
March-November 2015	**Stage one of research of relevant literature, for comprehensive exams and literature review**
July 5, 2015	Historic referendum held on whether to accept or reject austerity deal proposed by Greece's lenders. Deal rejected by voters.

Table 2 continued

July-August 2015	Government passes third memorandum agreement and further austerity measures, contradicting referendum vote result
September 20, 2015	Snap parliamentary elections held, SYRIZA again finishes in first place and forms coalition government with the Independent Greeks
January-October 2016	**Stage two of research of relevant literature, for literature review**
November 2016-May 2017	**Development of dissertation proposal**
December 2016-August 2017	**Final round of interviews conducted, including follow-up interviews**
May 2017	Fourth memorandum agreement and accompanying austerity measures debated in Greek Parliament, ratified

The main concepts guiding this research study include the public sphere, civil society, and social and new media. Specifically, this study examines the role of social and new media in fostering the rejuvenation of the existing Greek public sphere or the formation of new public spheres in Greece, the role of social and new media in rejuvenating or bolstering Greek civil society, and the role of social and new media in fostering or promoting new social movements, political initiatives, and alternative media outlets.

Several different categories of analysis are utilized as part of this study. They include the diversity of opinion and diversity of sources, the inclusion and participation of oppositional voices in the dominant public sphere (including the mainstream media) or through an increase in the quantity or visibility of alternative and new media outlets, the growth in number or visibility of new civil society or "third sector" organizations and entities and/or the participation level in such initiatives, the diversity of new political parties or new social or grassroots movements, and

the contributions of social and new media to all of the aforementioned categories. The object of analysis for this research study is how social and new media has altered public discourse and civil society in Greece, as measured via individual perspectives (determined through the individual interviews that have been conducted), organizational perspectives (as measured through the five illustrative examples of focus organizations that this study includes), as well as the perspectives of particular categories of individuals (through electronic survey research and the three sample populations which were surveyed).

The following research questions and subquestions guided this research project:

RQ1*: How have social and new media challenged clientelism and diaploki in Greece via contributing to the expansion or rejuvenation of the public sphere and civil society in Greece during the years of the economic crisis?*

RQ2*: How do public institutions, as well as civil society, citizen, and activist organizations and movements employ social media to engage with the public, to spread their message and to organize political or social movements?*

> ***SQ1****: How have social and new media contributed to political change, changes in political behavior, or the formation of new political movements in Greece during the crisis?*
>
> ***SQ2****: How have social and new media been used towards the formation of social movements and protest movements in Greece during the crisis?*

RQ3*: Do social and new media differentiate themselves from the mainstream media in Greece, and if so, how?*

> ***SQ3****: How have social and new media contributed to the formation and development of alternative or community-oriented media outlets in Greece?*
>
> ***SQ4****: Are social and new media in Greece considered to be more credible sources of news and information compared to traditional, mainstream media institutions?*

These research questions and subquestions are closely interrelated, and together, they cover all of the categories of analysis that this research project focuses on. Furthermore, the research

questions seek to address the many gaps which were identified in the existing research and literature, and which were discussed in the literature review in the preceding section, which pertain to the Greek public sphere, Greek civil society, the Greek media landscape, alternative media in Greece, social and new media in Greece, and social movements and protests in Greece. These gaps include a notable lack of research on the specific impact of social and new media on the Greek public sphere and on civil society in Greece, the potential impact of social and new media on the formation of new political parties and movements in Greece, the usage of social and new media by these new political parties and movements, how mainstream media have reacted to "competition" from social and new media outlets, and how social and new media may have helped foster new alternative, community, or radical media initiatives in Greece. The following subsections will present the methodological tools utilized in this project.

3.3 – INTERVIEWS

Qualitative interviewing is a research method that is particularly well suited for developing detailed descriptions of specific phenomena or ideas, describing processes, developing holistic description, learning how events are interpreted and understood, and bridging intersubjectivities (Weiss, 1994: 8-9). They allow researchers to *understand* the experiences, knowledge, and/or worldviews of the interviewees, often providing a window into the experiences of an individual who has "been there" or "is there" (Lindlof & Taylor, 1995: 173-174; Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 3; Seidman, 1998: 3). It is for these reasons that quantitative interviews were selected as an integral component of this research project.

The interview method employed was that of semi-structured interviews. Also called focused interviews, semi-structured interviews allow for each interview to be tailored to the

specific expertise of the individual being interviewed, while also providing a set of standard questions which are directly relevant to the research questions and the overall project, which are asked of each participant. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews do not impose a set of response categories upon respondents (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 5-6).

For each interview, a rapport process with the participant is first employed (Spradley, 1979: 78) and interview guides were employed during the interview process, providing a list of standard questions addressed in each interview, as well as specific notes on each participant (Weiss, 1994: 46-49). Question types which were employed in the interviewing process include example and experience questions (Spradley, 1979: 88-89), contrast questions (Ibid., 157; Baxter and Babbie, 2004: 334-335), "grand tour" and "mini-tour," or "main" questions (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011: 203; Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 145-147; Spradley, 1979: 86-88), and follow-up questions (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 154). IRB approval for human subjects research was obtained from all participants via signed and dated paper consent forms, while all participants affirmatively provided their approval for the audio of the interview to be recorded. Two pilot interviews were conducted in a prior visit to Greece in 2011, to refine the final questionnaire.

The sample of interview participants was primarily selected via purposeful (or non-probability) sampling, based on informed judgments on which participants would be useful to recruit (Baxter & Babbie, 2004: 110; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011: 110). Within this framework, the selection of the interview sample was guided by such principles as criterion sampling (candidates who possessed specific criteria which made them a worthy case to be interviewed), maximum variation sampling (in order to ensure that as many different variations of a case were explored), recruitment of typical and atypical cases, quota sampling (such as ensuring that at least one

interview with an individual from each political party represented in the Greek or European Parliaments was conducted), and snowball sampling (where certain interviewees also served as informants, suggesting other possible candidates to be interviewed) (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011: 111-116). For example, in the case of politicians and members of Parliament who were interviewed, effort was made to interview at least one representative from each political party represented in the Greek Parliament during the period being studied, plus individuals from a diverse range of smaller political parties lacking parliamentary representation. In the case of snowball sampling, journalists who participated were particularly willing to share their network of contacts, and this was the primary means through which politicians and political personnel were recruited, who were otherwise difficult to successfully reach and recruit.

In total, the interview sample consists of a total of 92 individual interviews with 94 individuals, with a response rate of 74.80 percent (123 invitations were extended in total). Interviewees included journalists, bloggers, social media professionals, mass media professionals, academics, activists, civil society representatives, opinion leaders, politicians, political party personnel, employees of government ministries, and candidates for public office. While there was no pre-determined number of interviews established, interviewing continued until it was deemed that a saturation point had been reached (Rubin & Rubin, 1995: 72-73). One guiding principle, however, was to interview at least a few individuals who together were likely to constitute comparison cases (Weiss, 1994: 29). Interviews were all conducted face-to-face and were audio recorded, with affirmative permission provided by each subject for the recording to take place. No interviewees dropped out of the study at any time.

Regarding the 31 individuals who were invited to participate but who ultimately did not, the majority of invitees were politicians and public officials (particularly from major political parties). For these invitees, it is possible that e-mail and phone communications were filtered by staffers and the invitations never reached the officials themselves, while for others, a heavy workload may have been a contributing factor in their inability to participate.

The interviewees chosen to participate in this research study were selected because their knowledge areas or areas of experience and expertise were deemed to be directly relevant to the conceptual areas being studied, including the public sphere, civil society, and social and new media. Most of the interviewees, though not all, also maintained an active presence on one or more social media tools, such as Facebook or Twitter. Interviews also included atypical cases, such as a "man on the street" (a retired banker) with no relation at all to the media, political parties, civil society organizations, or activist movements or groups; an unemployed journalist, a small-island blogger, and journalists and other individuals who were *not* social media users.

Initial outreach for the first individual interviews which were conducted followed two strategies: sending out invitations to prominent personalities that I was aware of and who maintained a very active social media presence, and outreach to existing networks of contacts, both for interviews and for suggestions and recommendations of others that I could come in contact with. Following this latter model, a form of snowball sampling was practiced, where participants were invited to recommend other individuals for potential participation in the study, particularly to fill in existing gaps in the body of interview subjects. However, "cold" invitations were also sent out, for instance to political parties where I could not find any means to contact a specific individual. In such communications, invitations were extended either to specific

individuals whom I wished to interview, or a request was made for a representative of that organization or entity who would be available for an interview.

On all levels, numerous efforts were undertaken to develop a diverse and broad sample. Politically, participants were chosen across all of the political parties represented in parliament during the time period of this study, as well as from many smaller political parties and movements not represented in parliament, providing a wide diversity of political opinions and viewpoints. Furthermore, interviews were conducted with representatives of local and regional government, in addition to representatives from the national government and political parties. Journalists were interviewed from media outlets which ranged from major privately-owned television stations, to upstart online publications, to mainstream newspapers, to alternative online radio stations, running the gamut from publicly- and privately-owned mediums and including representatives of print, broadcast, and online-only outlets. Furthermore, well-known bloggers were interviewed as well. Representatives from a variety of civil society initiatives were interviewed, ranging from professionalized NGOs to grassroots and activist organizations and movements. While from a geographical standpoint most interviewees were located in Athens, several interviews were also conducted in Thessaloniki, Greece's second largest city, the Skouries region (site of controversial gold mining activity that has been a hotbed of activism in recent years), and the island of Symi. Even in the microcosm of Thessaloniki, interviews were conducted with a cross-section of individuals, including political personnel, journalists, bloggers, academics, and activists. In short, the "three pillars" of this research project: the public sphere, civil society, as well as social and new media, are well-represented through the individual interviews that have been conducted.

Nevertheless, biases are likely to exist within the sample of interviewees. Most interview subjects maintained some sort of online presence or other type of public presence, such as an active social media account, or were otherwise easily accessible via online means (such as personal websites or blogs, directly via social media accounts, or via publicly available telephone numbers). Several participants were recommended by other participants as part of the process of snowball sampling, and there may be inherent biases in terms of the socio-demographic circles which these particular individuals occupy. The sample is also largely centered around Athens and Thessaloniki, Greece's two largest cities by far, and it is possible that respondents from less urban parts of Greece would view social and new media and their impact differently. From a secondary standpoint though, several elected officials were interviewed whose electoral districts were outside of Greece's two main urban centers, and it is possible that their insights could, in part, help address this potential bias. Ideologically though, great efforts were taken to ensure that a very full spectrum of political parties and voices were included in the interview sample.

All of the interviews were transcribed, while quotations have occasionally been edited to eliminate conversational spacers, false starts, and other irrelevant material, and to reorganize for coherence (Ibid., 197-198). A coding process was then employed, via the use of a codebook, pilot coding, and a combination of the following methods: attribute coding, magnitude coding, simultaneous coding, descriptive/topic coding, evaluation coding, holistic coding, subcoding, second-cycle coding, and metasummary (Saldaña, 2013).

Specifically, this set of coding tools was utilized to best organize a vast amount of interview data that was collected. Initially, the transcribed data from these interviews was entered into an Excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet contained columns for information about each

interview (such as the name of the interviewee, a classification which best described their profession or position (for instance, “academic” or “journalist”), the date the interview was conducted, the location where the interview was conducted, the specimen/excerpt of the interview being transcribed and the time block it corresponds to in each respective audio recording of the interview), a metasummary of the interview, four main columns for coding and subcoding each excerpt, and more. The transcribed interviews themselves were spread across six tabs within the spreadsheet: one tab for the individual interviews, and five tabs corresponding to the interviews for each of the five illustrative examples. An additional tab was created to keep track of metadata regarding the interviews, including demographic details of the interviewees.

The Excel spreadsheet was continuously tweaked throughout the process of transcription, to best accommodate coding needs which arose as the transcription process was navigated. These revisions included the insertion of additional columns for subcoding, as well as a column for the metasummary of each excerpt, when necessary. Minor as it may appear, this latter step was of tremendous importance to the overall process of coding. During this process, connections and insights began to be made with material that had previously been researched, which had addressed in the literature review, which directly addressed the project’s research questions or subquestions, or with other relevant concepts, thoughts, ideas, or arguments intended to be addressed in the final dissertation. Adding these metasummaries during the coding process resulted in the development of a running record of these important insights.

Throughout the transcription process, the manner in which excerpts were coded and subcoded was further refined. It did not take very long to determine that four categories of codes and subcodes would be most appropriate for this process, with the primary coding category

focusing on “big picture” topics relevant to my research, such as “public sphere” or “civil society,” the secondary category focusing on descriptive terms that are relevant to that particular excerpt or artifact (such as “transformation” or “definition,”) a third category focusing as a descriptor of the particular entity or concept that was being discussed (such as “mass medium,” or “clientelism and diaploki”), and finally, for the fourth category, a specific term or phrase is used to most closely describe the concept or entity being discussed (including, for instance, “Mega Channel,” “Radiobubble,” “December 2008 protests,” or “SYRIZA”). In turn, these codes and subcodes were easily searchable within the spreadsheet on a column-by-column basis, allowing for the easy location of all relevant excerpts to which a specific code had been assigned.

Methodologically, the coding method which was primarily employed was “descriptive coding.” This method assigns basic labels to data to maintain an inventory of topics. The technique of “simultaneous coding,” where two or more codes are assigned to the same attribute, was also frequently employed, in two specific ways: first, via the four columns of codes and subcodes which ranged from lesser to greater specificity, and also within each coding category. For instance, a specific excerpt could be coded both as “public sphere” and “mass media” in the primary coding column, if both of those codes were deemed relevant to that particular excerpt.

Subcoding is, of course, a coding technique in itself, while this combination of coding techniques is itself known methodologically as “eclectic coding.” Additionally, a form of “structural coding,” a technique where excerpts or artifacts from the data are coded in reference to the specific research question(s) (or subquestion(s)) that they address, was also developed to help organize the vast amount of transcribed data. This technique was tweaked in the following way: aside from the specific research question(s) and/or subquestion(s) that each excerpt was

relevant to, the relevant dissertation chapter that the material was applicable to was also notated, to better organize the transcribed data. Finally, a form of "attribute coding" was also performed, as relevant demographic attributes about each participant (particularly their name and their position or job title) is being recorded in a separate, dedicated column in the coding spreadsheet.

To keep track of these codes, a separate coding sheet was developed. An initial list of codes and subcodes was developed, in accordance with standard methodological practice, and this sheet continuously revised and updated with new codes and subcodes throughout the coding process. Newly-added codes and subcodes were then retroactively added back to previously coded excerpts whenever deemed relevant and necessary. This coding sheet served as a constant reference for the codes which were utilized, ensuring that duplicate or redundant codes were not created and that existing codes were not overlooked, while the usage of a standardized set of codes that would be easily searchable within the spreadsheet whenever necessary was ensured.

3.4 – SURVEY RESEARCH

The method of survey research, by means of the creation of an electronic survey questionnaire, was selected to provide a quantitative aspect to the research project, and to probe and explore three specific sample populations which are directly relevant to the research being performed with further depth. This method also provides the opportunity to potentially draw conclusions from the findings of the survey, which could, in turn, be compared with trends observed in the qualitative interviewing process.

The three sample populations which were selected are: Greece's members of the European Parliament (as elected in the May 2014 elections), the chief editors of Greece's 14 largest daily and Sunday newspapers, as determined by official circulation figures from

September 2014 (prior to the launch of the survey)[7], and finally, representatives from civil society and citizens' organizations in two randomly selected Greek prefectures outside of Athens. These two regions were the prefectures of Korinthia and Evia. These three populations closely pertain to the study's core conceptual areas of focus (the public sphere, civil society, social and new media), and were also selected due to manageability. Greece's representatives in the European Parliament were selected due to the ability to easily send questionnaires to the entire population. This was likewise the case for the sample of chief editors of Greece's major newspapers, and the representatives of two smaller regions outside of Athens (adding a non-Athens-centric perspective to the study as well). For the latter, the selection of organizations comprising the sample consisted of all relevant organizations which could be located via the *enallaktikos.gr* website, which was found to offer the most complete and detailed listing of civil society, grassroots, and citizens' groups in each prefecture of Greece.

Once these sample populations were determined, paper-based pilot surveys were initially conducted in person amongst populations that were *similar* to the final survey, but which would not actually be included in the final research project (Fowler, 1993: 12). These populations included three representatives of non-parliamentary political parties, three journalists at independent and alternative media outlets, and three representatives of civil society organizations located in Athens. Each participant was asked to provide feedback about the survey, including

[7] Official circulation figures from the week of September 1-7, 2014 were used, including the six highest-circulating daily afternoon newspapers, the highest-circulating daily morning newspaper, the four highest-circulating Sunday-only newspapers, and the highest-circulating weekly newspaper. In addition, daily broadsheet *Kathimerini* was also included in the sample, even though its circulation figures (which are comparable to the country's most popular newspapers) were, until May 2017, were not included in the figures provided by the official "Europe" Greek press distribution agency, but only published in Sunday editions of *Kathimerini*. Tabloid newspaper *Espresso*, despite relatively high circulation figures, was not included, due to its focus on celebrity and lifestyle news. Circulation data can be found at http://content-mcdn.feed.gr/pegasus/Multimedia/pdf/PDP_20140901.pdf and http://content-mcdn.feed.gr/pegasus/Multimedia/pdf/PWP_201436.pdf.

questions or answer choices they found to be confusing, and suggestions for other questions or topics to address. The feedback received from the pilot survey was used to make many improvements and clarifications to the questionnaire prior to the start of the actual survey period.

The types of questions included in both the pilot study and the final questionnaire included open-ended and closed-ended questions, composite measures, and contingency measures (Baxter & Babbie, 2004: 170-185). While most of the questionnaire was uniform across the three sample populations, the final section of the questionnaire was customized for each respective population. An online survey platform, *Limesurvey*, was chosen to host the electronic questionnaire. *Limesurvey* was selected due to its dynamic platform and features, which allowed multiple question types, the display of questions that would be contingent on previous replies (this feature was used in order to display the correct final questionnaire section for each participant), its support of multiple languages, its data collection and export features, and the ease of sending invitations and follow-up messages to those invited to participate in the survey. Through this platform, e-mails were sent to each of the individuals who were invited to participate. Follow-up invitations were sent by e-mail at regular weekly intervals, until the survey period (three months) concluded (Ibid., 189). A generous amount of time—over three months—was afforded to invitees to participate, with the understanding that due to time constraints, lost or unseen e-mails, the intervening holiday season during the survey period, or other factors, many potential participants would not be likely to immediately respond. Specifically, the survey was open from December 1, 2014 until March 15, 2015. Introductory messages and follow-up e-mails were sent in both Greek and English, and the entire survey platform (including the survey introduction, consent form, and questionnaire) was also available

in both languages. IRB consent for human subjects research was obtained from all participants via the online survey system (online agreement and electronic signature). Survey participants were informed about their rights, in both Greek and English, including the anonymity of the survey and the protection of their identities and responses, their right to withdraw consent and participation at any time during the survey, and their right to refuse to answer any question in the survey, other than one question asked for purposes of classification (and selection of the appropriate questionnaire by the online survey platform) in one of the three sample populations of the survey. These rights were clarified in both the initial e-mail invitation to the survey, and during the initial process of launching the survey via the online *Limesurvey* platform.

As shown in Table 3, the response rate was robust for newspaper editors, moderate for representatives of the European Parliament, and low for civil society and citizens' organizations. This can potentially be explained by a number of different factors. Newspaper editors, already accustomed to an active role in the public sphere due to their profession, likely took a strong interest in the research being conducted. Conversely, the moderate response rate of Greece's European parliamentary representatives can likely be attributed to their heavy workload and frequent travels between Greece, Brussels, and Strasbourg, as well as the possibility that e-mail invitations and messages left in follow-up telephone calls to their offices may have been filtered by their staffers and never reached the representatives themselves. The low response rate from civil society and citizens' organizations can likely be attributed to suspicion of outsiders (which is a common trait in Greece, especially amongst organizations that might not be favorable to the government or existing political system), sensitivity towards answering questions of a political nature, the potential inactivity of some groups, the lack of a representative from these

organizations that would be willing to take the time to respond to a questionnaire on behalf of the group, or not regularly checking their e-mail. The long questionnaire may have also dissuaded some from participation. It should also be noted that in the sample of Greek representatives in the European parliament, the seven responses that were received came from representatives of the top four political parties in the 2014 election[8], with two responses from each of the top three parties (SYRIZA, New Democracy, Golden Dawn), and one response from PASOK.

Table 3: Survey Samples and Response Rate

Sample Population	Responses	Questionnaires Sent	Participation Rate
Members of the European Parliament	7	21	33.33%
Chief editors of major newspapers	10	14	71.43%
Representatives of civil society organizations	6	51	11.76%
TOTALS	**23**	**86**	**26.74%**

Due to the low overall number of completed surveys, the data garnered from the survey questionnaires is not sufficient to draw statistical conclusions from, and as such, raw data from the survey results will not be presented in this dissertation, save for the appendix. Indeed, a more complex analysis of the data (using, for instance, software such as SPSS) was deemed unnecessary for the purposes of this study. Instead, the main objective of utilizing this data

[8] Official results of the 2014 European parliamentary election in Greece are available at http://ekloges-prev.singularlogic.eu/may2014/e/public/index.html.

would be to draw conclusions and detect potential trends or patterns of a more descriptive, rather than complex, nature, across the three survey populations and in comparison with the findings of the individual interviews and illustrative examples (see Lindlof & Taylor, 2011: 7). In this sense, the results of the survey could be viewed as data derived from in-depth, structured *qualitative* interviews, separate from the individual interviews and illustrative examples.

3.5 – ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

To help answer the three primary research questions, five illustrative examples of focus organizations and entities were selected. The objective of studying these illustrative examples was to examine five specific organizations spanning different parts of the public sphere and civil society, including three media organizations, a political party, and NGOs, how they have utilized social and new media in their operations, and how social and new media tools have helped these organizations bolster or enhance their contribution to the public sphere and civil society.

These five organizations were selected based on a number of factors, including their relations to the conceptual areas of focus of this research project (civil society, the public sphere, as well as social and new media), and their prominent position in the Greek social and new media sphere. Three main pillars of the public sphere are encompassed in these five examples, including the media (in several forms), a political party, and a non-governmental organization. Furthermore, by comparing a mainstream with an alternative media outlet (Skai and Radiobubble), and with a "hybrid" mainstream and alternative outlet (*enikos.gr*), potentially useful comparisons could be made across these three organizations.

Within each case, multiple interviews were conducted with individuals representing a broad cross-section of organizational roles and responsibilities, including social and new media

managers, editors, journalists, radio producers, communication strategists, political party leaders and candidates for public office, volunteers, and activists. This was done in order to attain multiple perspectives from within each organization from individuals employed in a variety of capacities and who may each have had different relationships with the usage of social and new media within that organization.

What follows is a listing of the five organizations which were selected as the illustrative examples for this study, including a description of each organization, the reasons why that particular entity was selected, the research questions that particular illustrative example is geared towards answering, and the number of interviews (including follow-up interviews) that were conducted for each organization:

- **Skai Media Group:** a mainstream media group consisting of Skai TV, a television station with nationwide coverage; Skai Radio, a news-talk radio station in Athens; the web portal *skai.gr*; and the *Kathimerini* and *eKathimerini* newspapers and online portals. Skai was chosen to provide a mainstream media counterweight to the other four illustrative examples, and due to its strong position in the Greek media landscape. It is an outlet that is active in television, radio, the press, and online, and is one of the most prominent sources of news in Greece, with *Kathimerini* often considered the Greek "newspaper of record." Skai's online news portal is one of the most popular in Greece, having been ranked as the country's most popular traditional news source in the Reuters Institute's 2016 study on digital news consumption in Greece (Kalogeropoulos et al., 2016: 42). Skai's online news portal is also arguably the most comprehensive of those of any of Greece's major television or radio stations. The Skai Media Group has been perhaps the

most active of Greece's mainstream media groups in terms of its usage of online and social media tools. This illustrative example targets RQ3 in particular. A total of six interviews with six individuals were conducted as part of this case study, including two interviews with Skai's respective social media managers in 2013 and 2017.

- **enikos.gr:** an online news portal founded in 2011, in the midst of the economic crisis, by the prominent journalist, television anchor, and radio personality Nikos Chatzinikolaou. *enikos.gr* is directly connected to Chatzinikolaou's live television panel discussion program *Ston Eniko*, while the design of the web portal bears a very close resemblance to a blog. This outlet was selected because it straddles the line between "mainstream" and "alternative" and because it is a "product" of the economic crisis, having been founded in 2011. It is operated, and indeed named after, one of Greece's most prominent journalists, with a long career in broadcasting and publishing. He is the part-owner of radio news stations *Real FM* in Athens and Thessaloniki (which were, and continue to be, the top-rated radio stations in their respective cities)[9], owner of one of the highest-circulation Sunday newspapers (*Real News*), and as of this writing, is the main presenter of the main evening newscast of one of Greece's largest privately-owned television stations, *Antenna TV*. At the same time, *enikos.gr* is designed with a blog format and operates very similarly to a blog, with many brief news updates throughout the day, a very active comments section, and some opinionated postings interspersed with news reporting. The blog is also tied in to Chatzinikolaou's television program, "*Ston Eniko*," and for a time this program was broadcast exclusively via *enikos.gr*, when it was left without a home on

[9] Official radio audience data for Athens and Thessaloniki is available at https://www.focusbari.gr/media-research/radio/research-radio-attica.html.

mainstream television. Furthermore, *enikos.gr* is considered one of Greece's most popular online news sources. In the 2016 study of digital news consumption conducted by the Reuters Institute, *enikos.gr* was ranked as the fourth most-visited news website on a weekly basis, and the third most popular source of news that is located exclusively online (Ibid., 43-44). e*nikos.gr* was chosen as one of the five illustrative examples precisely because it straddles the boundary between "mainstream" and "alternative" media, while maintaining a very active online presence. The specific research question this case study aims to contribute to is RQ1. A total of four interviews with three individuals were conducted as part of this illustrative example.

- **Radiobubble:** an online radio station and web community which features programming of an activist and community orientation, as well as the popular Twitter hashtag #rbnews, which has been used as a point of reference during newsworthy events in Greece, particularly during protests and other social movements. Radiobubble features a variety of news and talk programs, often of an opinionated or non-mainstream nature, while a number of civil society initiatives, such as Tutorpool, providing tutoring to children in low-income households, were also developed out of the community which Radiobubble has helped foster. Though this is no longer the case, Radiobubble was, for several years (including much of the period covered by this study) based out of a physical social space, the Radiobubble Café, which served as a space of organizing and producing radio broadcasts, as a meeting space for various activist and grassroots groups, and as a space of socialization and communication. It is due to all of the aforementioned reasons that *Radiobubble* was selected. It is one of the most visible "alternative" media outlets in

Greece, has served as an incubator for a number of other initiatives which could be seen as contributors to Greek civil society, and built a reputation in Greece and abroad for its coverage of protests and social movements within the country. Among the five illustrative examples that have been selected, Radiobubble represents alternative media, but its activities also closely pertain to civil society. RQ1 and RQ3 are targeted by this illustrative example, while a total of eight interviews with eight different individuals were conducted as part of this specific illustrative example, in 2012-2013, 2015, and 2017.

- **Independent Greeks – Anexartitoi Ellines:** a political party which was founded in early 2012, in the midst of the Greek economic crisis. The launch of the party was announced on Facebook, and especially in the first months of its existence, the party was extremely active on Facebook, inviting the public to help draft the party's manifesto and policy platform, via online polls. Within months of its foundation, in the snap parliamentary elections of May 2012 and the follow-up parliamentary elections of June 2012, the Independent Greeks were able to enter Parliament, with a 10 percent and 8 percent showing, respectively. In January 2015, following that month's snap parliamentary elections, the Independent Greeks joined the SYRIZA-led government as minority coalition partner (albeit with a reduced electoral share, closer to 4 percent), and this was the case following new parliamentary elections which were held in September 2015. Party leader Panos Kammenos, currently Greece's Minister of Defense, is very active and often outspoken on social media. The Independent Greeks are perhaps the first party in Greece which truly harnessed the potential power and reach of social media to establish their electoral base. Within the five illustrative examples which have been selected, the

Independent Greeks political party represents the "official public sphere," or political sphere, and were selected due to their reputation in Greece as being "the party of Facebook" due to the manner in which the party utilized this social medium during its launch and in the first months of its existence. RQ2 is primarily targeted by this illustrative example, for which a total of nine interviews with nine individuals were conducted, in 2012-2013 and in 2017.

- **Boroume:** a non-governmental organization based in Athens. Boroume was founded in 2011, in the midst of the economic crisis, and its mission is to limit food waste by helping to link organizations which possess unsold or excess food, with organizations which require such food to assist those in need. Boroume was known from the start as having been founded, in part, "on" social media, being particularly engaged with social media tools. Boroume serves as the "civil society representative" amongst the five illustrative examples which have been selected. RQ1 is addressed by this particular case study, for which five interviews with four individuals were conducted, in 2012-2013 and in 2017.

For each of the illustrative examples, the primary objective is to explore how these organizations have utilized social and new media in their efforts, the extent to which social and new media have provided avenues to spread their message and participate in the public sphere that were previously unavailable to them, the number and variety of social and new media outlets used and their overall reach, and their perspectives as to how social and new media have impacted the broader public sphere and/or civil society and their specific sector (media, politics, non-governmental organizations). Interviews were conducted with multiple individuals associated with the organization in question, across multiple roles and positions, including

individuals responsible for the organization's social and new media presence, administrative personnel, members of Parliament, volunteers, journalists, and others). The interview methods employed were identical to the individual interviews conducted as part of this study, through the utilization of semi-structured interviews, with additional questions formulated that were asked of all participants within each specific illustrative example. Follow-up interviews have been conducted as deemed necessary. As with the individual interviews, IRB approval for human subjects research was obtained from all participants via signed and dated paper consent forms, and all participants provided their approval for the audio of the interview to be recorded.

3.6 – HISTORICAL-DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

This research method pertains to the analysis of the Greek media landscape and the Greek blogosphere—particularly the phenomenon of "news blogs" becoming popular "alternative" sources of news—which will foreground the overall media environment and the context in which social and new media outlets are operating today and what, in particular, they might be *different to*. This approach is utilized to identify the main characteristics and trends in the present-day Greek media environment, including the regulatory environment in which they operate and the restrictions that it may present in the operation of these outlets; plus relevant historical factors.

3.7 – INDICATORS

This research project is one which is largely based on *opinions*. There has long been a perception which evident in the existing body of literature and research, that Greece is a country with a limited or atrophic public sphere and civil society, with a high degree of clientelism, corruption, and patronage; and a low degree of institutional credibility and trustworthiness. In this project, the object of analysis is how social and new media has potentially altered public

discourse and civil society in Greece, as measured via the perspectives of *individuals* (via the individual interviews that have been conducted), the perspectives of *organizations* (as determined through the five illustrative examples), and the perspectives of specific *categories* of individuals (as determined through the surveys which were conducted across three sample populations). Even though the survey research was intended to provide quantitative data, many of the questions included in the survey relied upon the participants' *perceptions* of issues which relate to the public sphere, civil society, and social and new media.

Ultimately, this study seeks to determine impact of social and new media on the Greek public sphere, Greek civil society, and Greek public discourse. How can these potential changes be determined or measured? Utilizing the definitions of the public sphere and civil society which were presented earlier, and the distinction that has been made between these two contexts, several indicators which could capture whether or not the public sphere or civil society has been rejuvenated are utilized in this study. These indicators are listed in the table below:

Table 4: Indicators

Public Sphere	Civil Society
• Formation of new political parties • Creation of new media outlets, including alternative media outlets • Broadening of public discourse • Influencing and fostering protests and social movements • Changes in the political landscape (such as voter behavior or participation) • Reduction in clientelism, patronage, and "diaploki" • Increased usage of social and new media for matters of public interest and concern	• An increase in the number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) • An increase in the number of citizens' movements and activist movements • An increase in volunteerism • Increased citizen involvement in public affairs • Increased awareness of civil society organizations and initiatives • Increased usage of social and new media for civil society efforts and initiatives • Development of media outlets by civil society groups

Moreover, via the illustrative examples, the specific *means* through which social and new media have been used by various actors was ascertained. This includes a determination of which social or new media channels have been used most frequently and how they have been used; the types of actors or organizations that have used them; and their contribution to the efforts of alternative media outlets, political or social movements, and civil society initiatives. The survey research, in turn, allowed *perceptions* of social and new media's impact on civil society and the public sphere to be measured and to be compared across the three sample populations.

Finally, by describing the existing media landscape and context in which social and new media have arisen in Greece, there will be a point of comparison made which will permit a determination as to *how* social and new media are different, and *what* they are different to.

3.8 – ENSURING VALIDITY

Internal validity was ensured via a variety of methods. For instance, the process of subject selection and determination that interviewees were valid members of the groups they were thought to be a part of was confirmed via the opening question in each interview, which asked the subjects to describe their specific role and involvement within that respective organization. The Hawthorne Effect and Unintentional Expectancy were alleviated through the development of a rapport process with each interviewee, and further confirmed via the overall consistency of the respondents' replies. Regarding procedure validity, the same basic interview guide and questionnaires were employed across all interviews that were conducted, all interviews were performed face-to-face, and all followed the same procedure of explaining the rights of the participant, obtaining consent for participation and for audio recording the interview, and

performing the interview itself. Moreover, for the survey questionnaires, the same questionnaires on the same online platform were used for all participants and sample populations.

For a nationally-focused case study, as is the case with this research project, it is difficult to ensure that results here will necessarily be applicable to other national contexts and environments in other countries. However, to the extent that determining factors are identified, the broader relationships between social media, political democracy, and conventional media can be mapped, and can be applied to other national and social contexts.

Chapter 4: Context: Recent Greek History and the Greek Media Landscape

4.1 – INTRODUCTION

A necessary prerequisite for understanding the potential impact of social media on the Greek public sphere and on civil society in Greece during the years of the economic crisis is the examination of the broader sociopolitical context in Greece in the years immediately preceding the economic downturn. Understanding the context within which social and new media came into the picture and within which new media outlets, citizens' initiatives, social movements, and civil society organizations developed, is vital in order to understand what these new initiatives were responding *to*. For instance, if social media provided an alternative source of news and information, what incumbent media landscape were they alternative *to*? What gaps existed in the existing public sphere and realm of public discourse which could be addressed by social media and by new media outlets? What societal forces were at play in Greece in the years leading up to the onset of the economic crisis which may have sparked the social and political upheaval which followed? What social and political needs and what gaps in the existing civil society sphere were new civil society organizations, and citizens' and grassroots initiatives, responding to?

In this chapter, the sociopolitical and media landscape in Greece in the years prior to the onset of the economic crisis will be examined. The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section will provide an overview of the incumbent mainstream media landscape which was extant in Greece, with a particular focus on the broadcasting landscape and its many peculiarities. This will be followed by a section examining the rise of the blogosphere in Greece beginning in the first decade of the 2000s, with particular attention paid to the development and growth of so-called "news blogs," the potential factors which accounted for their rapid rise in

popularity, the content they provided and the extent to which it was distinct from the news and information available via mainstream media outlets, their influence upon public discourse and on social movements and political developments in Greece, and potential factors accounting for their subsequent decline in popularity. The final section of this chapter will look at the protest movements which sprang up in Greece in the latter part of the previous decade, including the massive December 2008 riots, the extent to which social and new media tools helped fuel these movements, and their potential impact on ensuing political and social developments in Greece during the years of the economic crisis.

4.2 – GREEK MAINSTREAM MEDIA LANDSCAPE

In Greece, broadcasting is governed by Article 15 of the Greek constitution, which was ratified in 1975 and under which broadcasting was placed under the "immediate control" of the state (Zaharopoulos & Paraschos, 1993: 45). Initially, this article was construed as granting the state a full monopoly over broadcasting, but a 1987 decision by the Council of State, Greece's highest administrative court, overturned this interpretation. Under the 1987 ruling, private broadcasting could be permitted under "state supervision." The National Council for Radio-Television (ESR) was established in 1989 but remained largely ineffective and invisible until 2001, when following a constitutional revision, purview over broadcast licensing was officially extended to the ESR. As part of this same constitutional revision, Article 15 was clarified to recognize state-issued broadcast licenses, as part of the interpretation permitting the operation of privately-owned broadcasters under "state supervision" (Kalogirou & Sourpi, 2006: 102).

As described in chapter 2, the liberalization of the broadcasting landscape in Greece is considered by scholars such as Hallin and Mancini (2004) as an example of "savage

deregulation," referring to a situation where commercial broadcasting was introduced in an uncontrolled fashion, with loose legal requirements and lax or selective enforcement of existing laws. As stated in chapter 2, Greece does fit this model in the sense that private broadcasters indeed proliferated following deregulation, while this liberalization of the airwaves occurred in a seemingly haphazard manner, without the strict enforcement of licensing laws or technical standards. However, Kogen (2010: 340-342) argued that Greece does not represent an example of "savage deregulation," as deregulation was spurred on by the actions of opposition political forces who were, to a significant extent, shut out of the public sphere and particularly the state-controlled broadcast media up until that point. According to Kogen's perspective, these oppositional voices took to the airwaves and forced the legal system to follow, preparing legislation opening up the airwaves after the fact.

While this view is largely accurate, Vovou (2009: 117-119) provides some clarity which likely leads us to the most accurate description of deregulation as it occurred in the case of Greece. According to Vovou, it was not at all anarchic, and instead was the product of political machinations and battles between the government and opposition at a time when the governing regime was unstable and weak after almost a decade in power. The developments of the late 1980s and early 1990s give credence to this perspective. In 1987, law 1730/1987 was passed, soon followed by Presidential Decree 25/1988, which together established the right for private stations to obtain licenses (Kalogirou & Sourpi, 2006: 83). When the state broadcasting monopoly was broken in earnest in 1987, it occurred via the launch of municipally-owned radio stations. The first such station was in the provincial city of Halkida (Radio Halkida), and this was followed by municipal stations in Greece's three largest cities: Athens (Athena 9,84 FM),

Thessaloniki (FM 100), Piraeus (Kanali 1), as well as in other cities and towns throughout the country. These municipalities had all been won by candidates who had been elected with the support of the opposition New Democracy political party that year, and were intended to serve as a broadcast counterweight to the state-controlled ERT. Furthermore, some of the most prominent pirate radio stations of that era, many of which remained on the airwaves in the early years of deregulation, were also of a highly political nature and frequently represented specific political interests, including live interviews with politicians and elected officials (Nevradakis, 2014a).

The municipal stations were soon followed onto the airwaves by major publishers and business and shipping magnates. As described in chapter 2, newspapers in Greece were traditionally highly politicized and typically aligned with partisan interests or even specific politicians or factions within parties. That model was, for all intents and purposes, replicated by the upstart privately-owned television and radio broadcasters. Despite the aforementioned law and decree regulating private radio broadcasting, it quickly became evident that these laws were not enforceable. As a result, many stations began to operate without any license whatsoever (Sims, 2007: 244). The television landscape was similarly divided up along political lines.

In 1989, after the collapse of the PASOK government and the formation of an unusual and highly unstable coalition between the right-wing New Democracy party and the left-wing Synaspismos political party (predecessor to SYRIZA), law 1866/89 was passed, formally deregulating the television industry. The criteria set forth by this law in order to be licensed included the applicant's prior experience and involvement in the mass media, or the applicant's status as a local municipal authority. Being that the only actors who had, up until the late 1980s, any "prior experience" in mass media were publishers, this law could be viewed as an example

of tailored legislation which was designed to turn the television landscape over to vested publishing interests and local government authorities. Two nationwide licenses were initially issued, one to a consortium of publishers and business figures broadly representing the "center-left" and representing PASOK, and one to another group of publishers and business moguls representing the "center-right" and favoring New Democracy. The first consortium launched Mega Channel, which for much of the 1990s and 2000s was Greece's biggest and most-watched television station, while the second consortium, despite plans to launch "Nea Tileorasi," ultimately failed to put the station on the air (Ibid.). This void was, however, quickly filled by Antenna TV, owned by the aforementioned ship owner Minos Kyriakou, who was favorable to the New Democracy party and who launched the station without a license. What could be described as a free-for-all followed, with one publisher and business magnate after another taking to the airwaves without any licensing formalities. For instance, Kanali 29 was launched in 1990 by the Kouris family, publishers of the vehemently pro-PASOK *Avriani* tabloid; the same family had also established Radio Athina (Nevradakis, 2014b). That same year, a prominent right-wing politician who was with the New Democracy party at the time, Giorgos Karatzaferis, launched Tele City and Radio City. Karatzaferis built upon his prior audiovisual experience, which he had utilized in the 1980s in a creative way to circumvent ERT's broadcasting monopoly: he had launched a subscription video service, tape recording his talk show and mailing the video cassettes to his subscribers on a regular basis (Ibid.; Nevradakis, 2014a).

What should therefore be clear is that privately-owned broadcasting was introduced in Greece not under conditions of uncontrolled anarchy but, rather, *controlled* anarchy. The legal vacuum which existed both prior to regulation and immediately after the first municipally- and

privately-owned radio stations began operating, as well as instances of tailored legislation and weak enforcement of what laws did exist, seem to have been intended to create conditions in which powerful and vested interests could take advantage of the apparent confusion. Such a "chaotic" environment at face value would allow powerful and well-connected actors to come on the air either without a license initially, or as the result of tailored legislation and a situation where such actors would not have to face competition from potentially more qualified applicants, who would otherwise be discouraged from applying for a license due to the legal uncertainty. As stated by Ioannis Adamidis, an editor at national broadcaster Skai TV:

> The mass media in Greece developed in a paradoxical and illogical manner…the process was a bit backward. It began initially with radio. First the radio stations opened and then the law followed, and even then it was not fully enforced. This then happened with television as well. (Personal communication, April 10, 2013)

Journalist Nikos Andritsos of Skai Radio 100.3 FM in Athens added:

> As with many things in Greece, [the broadcast landscape] developed without a specific context. It developed upon the basis that, for many years, you were obliged to choose between two channels which were both state-run. It developed upon a basis which was not defined by any specific framework, in order for specific standards to be set. This resulted in side effects which impacted the standards of public discourse. (Personal communication, April 12, 2013)

The press was highly partizanized; a system which was transplanted to broadcasting. As stated by Giannis Skarpelos, assistant professor at the Department of Communication, Media and Culture at the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences in Athens:

> The public sphere developed following the "metapolitefsi" [fall of the military government], and many newspapers which were especially popular with the public were directly connected with actors within the public sphere and public discourse, with political parties. I remind you of *Eleftherotypia* for instance, representing the left wing of PASOK, *Avriani* representing the populist wing of PASOK, newspapers such as *Eleftheros Typos* which attempted to authentically represent New Democracy, the traditional newspapers of the left, and in between, when the publishers' interests changed, so did their relationship with actors within the public sphere, and this had consequences

> for public discourse… Newspapers were not neutral communications vehicles but in fact set partisan rhetoric as public rhetoric. (Personal communication, May 29, 2013)

Skarpelos added that the newspapers' agenda-setting role in this regard was largely taken over by privately-owned television after 1989.

The replication of the partisan press system in the radio and television landscape did not detract in the slightest from the popularity of these mediums and the new privately-owned broadcasters. As detailed in chapter 2, state broadcaster ERT was particularly battered by the introduction of private broadcasting, with its audience figures declining sharply to the lowest percentage of any state or public broadcaster in Europe. In part, this could be explained by the association many Greeks had between ERT and state propaganda from each successive government. Up until 1982 for instance, one of the two state-owned television channels, YENED, was operated directly by the Greek military (Nevradakis, 2014a).

Various efforts to enact comprehensive broadcasting legislation in the 1990s and 2000s largely failed or were never fully implemented. Law 2328/1995, passed by the PASOK government in 1995, set a comprehensive framework for the licensing of television and radio stations. Several licensing tenders were launched for both radio and television but only one was ever fully completed: the controversial licensing of 20 radio stations in the Athens region in 2001 (out of 86 applicants and over 100 radio stations which were operating). The rationale given for the low number of licenses was the grand opening of the new Eleftherios Venizelos International Airport in Athens in March 2001 and claims on the part of the government that the operation of more than 20 privately-owned radio stations would create harmful interference to the aviation frequencies to be used by the new airport. In practice, this argument collapsed quickly: on the eve of the opening of the new airport, the ESR issued eight additional "temporary" licenses using

different (and unclear) criteria from those with which the original 20 stations were licensed. The remaining 60-plus radio stations were violently shut down in one night with the assistance of riot police. Following an outcry, a new licensing tender was hastily launched in 2002 for 15 additional stations, replacing the previous year's temporary licenses. Even with a total of 35 licensed stations, approximately two-thirds of the stations that had previously been in the air were shut down, while those that remained overwhelmingly were owned by major publishing and business interests, local municipalities, or the church (Nevradakis, 2014c).

A hodgepodge of legislation followed law 2328/1995, none of which has succeeded in achieving the full licensing of radio or television stations. Law 2778/1999 aimed to "freeze" the proliferation of radio stations by conferring a temporary legal status only to those stations which were operating on November 1, 1999 and which had previously applied for a license. These stations would receive a "certificate of legality" that would remain in effect until licenses were formally issued (Kalogirou & Sourpi, 2006: 105). As of 2018, this law remains valid, providing the legal status under which radio stations throughout Greece, except for Athens, continue to operate. Indeed, as no application deadline was ever specified by the law, stations have continued to apply for certificates of legality up until the present time (Nevradakis, 2012: 132).

The supplemental licensing of 15 additional radio stations in Athens in 2002 was invalidated by the Council of State in 2004, while the original licenses issued in 2001 expired in 2005, as they were valid for a four year term. Unable or unwilling to move forward with a new licensing process despite a court order, the then-government inserted a rider into an otherwise unrelated law, 3310/2005, which legalized all radio stations which were broadcasting in Athens on December 31, 2004, as long as they were operating under the same name and same ownership

as they were prior to being shut down in 2001 and with the precondition that the station had applied for a license in all previous licensing bids (Nevradakis, 2012: 137). While this law was purportedly meant to provide legal coverage for the 35 stations licensed in 2001 and 2002, its provisions were written in such a way that several stations which had been shut down in 2001 but which had later reopened illegally could attain legal status with an application to the ESR. In reality, this process has also seemingly been tainted by political and economic interest. One example is the case of Radio Veronica, a station which had been shut down in 2001 but which resumed broadcasting in 2004 without a license. On at least two occasions, Radio Veronica applied for a certificate of legality under law 3310/2005, only to be denied by the ESR. In 2007, however, when rumors were circulating that the station was about to be purchased by the Kouris family in a joint venture with prominent journalist and newscaster Nikos Chatzinikolaou, the ESR granted Radio Veronica a certificate of legality. Within months, the station was renamed Real FM and became the influential and highly popular radio counterpart to the popular Sunday newspaper *Real News*, featuring a news-talk format. Within a few years, Real FM reached first place in the Athenian audience ratings. Meanwhile, the expired licenses of the 35 stations legalized in 2001 and 2002 have been renewed on a rolling basis, usually every six months, via riders inserted into unrelated legislation passed in parliament. The Council of State invalidated this practice, but it has continued with impunity (Nevradakis, 2014b).

In 2007, the New Democracy-led government passed what was touted as the most comprehensive media and broadcasting law to date, law 3592/2007, which once again set forth provisions for the licensing of television and radio stations. In reality though, few aspects of this law have ever been enforced. One aspect of the law that has been implemented, however, is the

clause permitting the ownership of multiple stations, which had previously been forbidden. This resulted in a wave of concentration in the broadcast industry, not unlike the concentration which followed the passage of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 in the United States (Nevradakis, 2014e). In practice, this allowed a small number of media moguls to purchase multiple stations and to hold influence over a larger share of the audience, further consolidating their power.

It bears noting that this same government was elected in March 2004, amidst the euphoria of the upcoming Olympic Games in Athens, in part based on pledges to do away with "diaploki" and to rein in Greece's media barons. Within a few months after attaining power, in late 2004, the new government introduced draft legislation which would have imposed far more stringent transparency standards upon the owners of television and radio stations, including prohibiting offshore corporations from owning shares in such stations. The introduction of this draft legislation led to an extended period of crisis for the government, which came under continuous attack from Greece's major media outlets, which revealed scandal after scandal against members of the government. Ultimately, this controversial law was withdrawn (Zervas, 2009).

Another clause of law 3592/2007 which was enforced and which also reflects the highly politicized nature of broadcasting and media regulation in Greece is a provision – perhaps uniquely Greek – permitting radio and television stations owned by political parties represented in parliament to be legalized without going through a licensing process. Two stations have been legalized under this provision of the law: Sto Kokkino 105.5 FM in Athens, owned by the SYRIZA political party, and Radio Asty (formerly Radio City and now known as ART FM) of the Popular Orthodox Rally (LAOS) political party, led by aforementioned politician Giorgos Karatzaferis, formerly of New Democracy. LAOS is no longer is represented either in the Greek

or European parliament, but ART FM nevertheless remains on the air to this day (Nevradakis, 2014d). In all, in the Athens region, radio stations were operating under nine different legal statuses as of 2010 (Nevradakis, 2012: 151-152), a situation which remains similar to this day.

Another aspect of legal chaos with regard to broadcasting regulation in Greece is the preferential treatment afforded by the law to radio and television stations which have been classified as "news stations," as opposed to "entertainment stations." Up until 2010, radio stations classified as airing news content were the only ones legally permitted to retransmit their signal from a secondary transmitter site, a technical necessity in the hilly Athens region (Nevradakis, 2012: 139). In a more recent development, a rider slipped into a law passed by the New Democracy-PASOK coalition government in 2014 permitted "news stations" from changing their classification to "entertainment" with a simple application submitted to the ESR. However, "entertainment" stations were not permitted, under this same law, to change their programming classification to "news" (Nevradakis, 2014d). In effect, this has created a closed marketplace for broadcast news stations. "Entertainment" stations are not permitted to air any news programming other than short newscasts, and have been fined for violating this clause (Ibid.). Between this law and the fact that there have been no licensing tenders completed for radio and television in many years, the only way a potential broadcaster who wishes to air news programming can gain access to the airwaves is by purchasing an existing station and taking a risk that this station will be licensed if and when a bid is announced. Furthermore, being that there are only a limited number of "news stations," the purchase price of such stations is likely to be inflated, while the legal requirements for "news stations" under law 3592/2007 include a

provision with a much higher minimum number of employees than "entertainment" stations, resulting in higher operating expenses that only deeper pockets will be able to meet.

What all of the above is meant to demonstrate is that even following the end of the state monopoly on broadcasting in 1987, television and radio in no way detached themselves from the political system, partisan politics, and the governments of the day, while in turn, both legislation and regulatory agencies were crafted with a view towards preserving the status quo. This has resulted in a situation where television and radio stations are, on the one hand, unlicensed or operating under a state of temporary legality, but on the other hand, hold tremendous power over the government of the day. Addressing the politicized nature with which broadcasting was deregulated and the issue of licensing treated by successive governments, Ferry Batzoglou, a journalist and correspondent for German mass media outlets, states:

> There was a time where PASOK dominated the central political scene, and it is not by accident that the first opening, the first pluralism…was from New Democracy…But [deregulation] had to start somewhere and so it did, and following this, a chaotic landscape developed beginning in the 1980s. This posed legal issues…as public frequencies have been licensed on a temporary basis and are perpetually renewed. Naturally, the authorities intentionally do not do anything to change this situation. It does not change in order to keep these means of communication under control, and what we see is when, from time to time, shortly before an electoral contest, there is some talk about licensing, this discussion disappears, nothing happens and the status quo remains. (Personal communication, May 24, 2013)

Rena Dourou, at the time a member of parliament with SYRIZA, added:

> [I]n Greece, over 20 years after the advent of private television there are no legally licensed frequencies…[it's unbelievable] that in a European country for many decades, in a country that wishes to belong in the first world and not the third world, successive governments…from two specific parties, PASOK and New Democracy, allowed television and radio stations to operate without a regulatory framework. It therefore follows that the introduction [of private broadcasting] was poorly done. (Personal communication, July 3, 2013)

The deregulation which occurred in the late 1980s in Greece could be said to have fostered the conditions for the reproduction of the existing and highly partisan press landscape in the electronic mass media. Indeed, the theme of reproduction or replication is one which we will come across often in this study. This strongly partisan broadcasting environment closely matches Hallin and Mancini's definition of the "Polarized Pluralist" or "Mediterranean" model of broadcasting, where private broadcasters maintain a dominant foothold in the industry while cultivating close ties with the government, political elite, political parties, and business interests. It could also be argued to be reflective of "capture theory," wherein regulators are influenced (or controlled) by the industries they are meant to regulate. This intertwined relationship between the state, political parties, and business and media interests is described in Greece as "diaploki," a concept which will be examined further in chapter 7 in relation to the extent to which the mainstream, hegemonic mass media outlets in Greece today are suffering from a crisis of credibility. As described by Baltzis:

> I think that there are two main characteristics of media in Greece. One characteristic is the instability of the legal framework and regulation. The other is the close relation of the most mainstream media with the construction, banking, and shipping sector and with the political parties. This is what we call in Greece "diaploki." I think that these are the two main characteristics that define the media landscape in Greece, all media, radio, television and of course the press. (Personal communication, February 23, 2013)

Within this context, a media landscape characterized by "diaploki," a very high degree of politicization, and a weak and haphazard legal framework which ultimately benefited the most powerful media moguls, a credibility crisis began to develop on the part of the Greek public at large, towards the mainstream mass media outlets. While the credibility crisis of the Greek mainstream media will be examined more closely in chapter 7, it bears noting that as the internet began to become popular and widely used in Greece towards the end of the first decade of the

2000s, it could be said that this crisis of credibility spurred increasing numbers of Greeks at the time to look for online alternatives to the hegemonic media landscape. It is here where the blogosphere comes in, particularly via the rapid growth in popularity of so-called "news blogs."

4.3 – The Rise (And fall) Of The Blogosphere

4.3.1 – Introduction

As seen in the preceding section, the mainstream press and mass media in Greece have long been characterized by their partisanship and their interplay with the government of the day. Most mainstream media outlets are concentrated in the hands of a relatively small group of powerful publishers, industrialists and businesspeople, who maintain close ties with the government and political establishment and who have not hesitated to use their media outlets to wield political influence and to lobby for their own interests. In this sense, the "fourth estate" in Greece has often been viewed as safeguarding the interests of its well-connected guardians, rather than the interests of the populace at large. Within such a media landscape, it was traditionally difficult for alternative and citizen-based media initiatives to successfully emerge and survive. Competition in the Greek media market is fierce due to the great plethora of mainstream media outlets, while successive governments have, at times, responded in a hostile fashion to the efforts of alternative media outlets.

It is within this environment that a new online media phenomenon appeared. Starting in 2006, a new category of blogs emerged which featured continuous news updates, commentary, and criticism. Many of the news items were revealing in nature, exposing alleged instances of corruption and wrongdoing within government and the business and media spheres, as well as on the part of individual politicians, businesspeople and major journalists and media personalities.

These blogs made an immediate impact, rapidly growing in popularity and garnering a great deal of attention—both positive and negative.

What is particularly noteworthy about these so-called "news blogs," as they were known in Greece, is that they attained popularity at a time when internet penetration in Greece was still at relatively low levels. According to statistics from the International Telecommunications Union (2018), 42.4 percent of the Greek population used the internet in 2009; the figure in 2006 was 32.25 percent. Nevertheless, as will be seen below, they quickly attained a tremendous degree of popularity and influence in Greece in the years immediately prior to the country's economic crash and the onset of the crisis which followed.

In the subsections which follow, the "news blog phenomenon" in Greece will be examined from several perspectives: who were the bloggers and the audience for these blogs, what factors accounted for their early popularity and how they were distinct from or similar to mainstream news sources, the legal challenges these blogs faced and the debate over anonymity on the internet, the overall impact these blogs had on the broader public sphere and public discourse in Greece, and potential reasons for their subsequent decline in popularity. In addition, specific blogs and bloggers will be examined, including the example of a blog which differentiated itself from the popular news blogs of the day and which instead served as the catalyst for a specific cause in the years leading up to the onset of the Greek economic crisis.

4.3.2 – Early Adapters and the Increase in Popularity of News Blogs

Many early bloggers in Greece were themselves early adapters of new technologies in a broader sense. Angeliki Gazi, assistant professor of journalism at the Technical University of Cyprus, attributes this to a cultural mentality inherent within the Greek people, one in which the

Greek people have a strong need to be heard, and which was similar to the manner in which they had previously adopted other new communications technologies:

> We have seen…the way in which Greeks embrace new things which are introduced in society in some manner. This is how they embraced the…deregulation of media. Suddenly in 1987 every random person, everyone who knew a couple of things about electronics and technology built a radio station to broadcast and to be heard in his neighborhood…The same thing happened, if you will, with cellular phones. Suddenly, surveys at the time showed that there is no Greek, no Greek household which did not have one and two and three cellular phones. The same thing occurred with the internet… I believe it was used, in my opinion, from this basic need of Greeks. I won't say if it is good, positive, or negative. For me it is noteworthy, this enthusiasm is characteristic…of the identity of the Greek. (Personal communication, January 11, 2013)

Blogger, publisher and documentary filmmaker Manolis Andriotakis, formerly a professional journalist, described his early experiences with blogging as such:

> My blog began by featuring articles which I was not getting published in the newspaper, this was in the beginnings, 10 years ago [in 2003], and in the years which followed, I focused on topics such as the media, journalism, on blogging itself, new media, social media, on my activism. It was broad-based, my blog was not monothematic, it has even featured my creative works, fiction pieces, artwork. In other words, my blog contains anything that concerns me. (Personal communication, May 27, 2013)

Journalist Giorgos Epiteidios, a web analyst with the Lambrakis Press Group (DOL) and blogger with DOL's *in.gr* online portal, described the transformation of his blog from a personal blog to one that was more closely related to developments in Greece:

> I started my blog writing about technology news, but after the crisis I used the blog as a site of therapy, instead of talking about my problems and my worries to a specialist, I write about them and people reply, so I have a number of interactions with my users and my viewers also talk to each other. (Personal communication, July 17, 2013)

Craig Wherlock, an educator residing in Greece since 1989 and known online as "Teacherdude," describes the similar transformation his blog underwent as a result of the worsening economic crisis, from the perspective of a citizen journalist who was not employed by any media outlet:

> This was very much a gradual process. If you look at my blog…it's a mix of teaching ideas, thoughts on teaching practice, photographs, video, maybe the occasional reference to what's happening, then that balance changed. The two most significant events for me were September 2007, when I was beaten the riot police, I was taking photograph at a demo, I got attacked by the riot police…And the other moment, I think, especially for Twitter, would be the Greek riots of 2008. (Personal communication, April 3, 2013)

The above bloggers, it must be noted, spoke from personal experience and on behalf of their own personal blogs. Andreas Kapsambelis, a journalist with the *Dimokratia* newspaper and publisher of the *Press-GR* blog, draws a distinction between personal blogs and news blogs, such as *Press-GR* (Personal communication, October 18, 2013). The early and rapid popularity of so-called "news blogs," however, provides us with insights into the reasons why ordinary Greeks began to turn to the internet in search of news and information, at a time when the medium was still relatively new in Greece and not universally available.

In May 2010, the Brussels-based weekly newspaper "New Europe" featured an extensive article on Greek blogosphere, featuring blogs such as *Troktiko* and contrasting what it interpreted as the failures of the "fourth estate" with the rise of the "fifth estate," exemplified by news blogs:

> Mass media, typically regarded as the fourth estate, are in their majority not serving as watchdogs of the political bodies, but disappointingly all too often find themselves accomplices by non-coverage or over-coverage of specific issues…[w]ith fewer gatekeepers, and in some cases, a near dictatorial approach to deciding what receives extensive coverage and what gets buried, Media have allowed for a new estate: The fifth estate" (New Europe Brussels Team, 2010).

According to New Europe, the fifth estate has emerged most strongly in Greece, with news blogs such as *Troktiko* leading this new journalistic movement.

Dimitris Yalourakis, director of communications with the Independent Greeks political party, attributes the early rise in popularity of news blogs to a realization on the part of the public

that the mainstream mass media were not credible, whilst reflecting Gazi's view that Greeks have a strong cultural need to be heard:

> When blogs became fashionable everyone abandoned the portals which existed up until then, and turned to blogs believing that they were more independent voices. This happened because the media moguls who owned a television station turned to the internet and developed a site or a large portal, with the result being that they controlled online news. Fortunately the public quickly realized this. The Greek has a need to be heard, and so a multitude of blogs were developed…[Greeks] believed they found a source of independent news and that they would learn the truth, because no one up until them was telling them the truth. (Personal communication, December 15, 2012)

This search for the "truth" was also specifically addressed by Giorgos Baganis, a journalist with the *enikos.gr* online portal-blog, stating: "…the public believed that the news [provided by news blogs] was the real news, without dependencies, without hidden interests…here was the anonymous blogger who was telling the truth" (Personal communication, December 19, 2012). This view is compatible with the oppositional role which some ascribed to the Greek blogosphere of that era. Mathaios Tsimitakis, a journalist with the *Efimerida ton Syntakton* newspaper, characterizes the 2006-2008 period as the "golden age" of the online public sphere and describes the early blogosphere in the following terms:

> I think that from the start, as early as 2004-2005 and the appearance of blogs in public dialogue in Greece, the role the blogs and later the social media took, was to oppose the media discourse. And I think that they define themselves a lot through this opposition to the media, through this controversy and this antagonism with the mainstream media. (Personal communication, February 13, 2013)

This oppositional role was further elaborated upon by Kyra Kapi, a journalist at Easy 97.2 FM in Athens, which is part of the Antenna Group of media companies. According to Kapi:

> Blogs such as *Troktiko* and other similar ones were in fashion, because everyone had a little power to write something which would not have had the opportunity to be published otherwise. I believe there was an effort to perform independent journalism and provide independent voices. The public was hearing the truth that could not be heard from the traditional mass media, which have a specific newscast with a specific format they do not

> deviate from. The public could find alternative content or [citizen] complaints and things that would not see the light of day otherwise. (Personal communication, June 3, 2013)

Another factor attributed to the popularity of news blogs was the publication of investigative journalism, or at least the *perception* that these blogs provided such content. This is closely related to the belief that the mainstream media were not providing such content: "Certainly one factor in the then-popularity of this phenomenon was that they introduced the model of revelatory journalism, [exposing] the dirty laundry of the system," said Aggeliki Boubouka, a journalist at the *Eleftherotypia* newspaper, adding "[o]f course this was a la carte. They published certain things and concealed others," hinting at the darker role some of these blogs were said to have played in threatening politicians and public figures with exposure of inexpedient, scandalous, or salacious information (personal communication, May 31, 2013).

For others, it was the scandalous content often presented by these blogs that itself was their main attraction. According to Failos Kranidiotis, attorney, journalist with the *Dimokratia* newspaper and *antinews.gr*, and adviser to then-Prime Minister Antonis Samaras:

> [News blogs] had the same draw as tabloid newspapers, which utilize sensational headlines and profanity. People often have what we call a voyeuristic syndrome…That's what these blogs do. One can be home and visit a blog and news which could be quite fantastic…This was the reason for their popularity and amongst a specific segment of the audience. People of good judgment…never trusted these blogs for their information. (Personal communication, December 6, 2013)

Maria Psara, a journalist with the *Ethnos* newspaper, tied this desire for voyeuristic information with the growing anger and disenchantment in Greek society:

> Here we have to do with the issue of the public's trust in the traditional media. The public was thirsty for alternative news and information and because these blogs published everything…they drew a great deal of interest from the public. At that time, the public first read *Troktiko* and *Fimotro* before logging in to social media…[The news blogs] were very aggressive and named names and the public had begun to get angry, and this content

> identified with the public and their anger. Therefore it made sense that they gained support and popularity. (Personal communication, November 11, 2013)

This openness, or perhaps distinction from the traditional mainstream media, was a selling point for these news blogs according to journalist Pashos Mandravelis of the *Kathimerini* newspaper, who also referenced the legal restrictions which professional journalists face in Greece:

> They were new and…you could find things that you could not find in the traditional media. One of the challenges Greek media face is that the law is so stifling that if it were to be enforced to the letter, nothing could be published…As with everything, [journalists] write because the laws are not enforced. But because you do not know where the boundary lies, there are things that are not written. Anonymous blogs, vulgar as they are, deliver some news that you cannot find in the traditional media and became popular as a result. (Personal communication, June 11, 2013).

Relating to the earlier contention that Greeks are inherently and culturally interested in new technologies and readily become early adapters, Panagiotis Vlachos, the president of the "Mbrosta" ("Forward Greece") political action group, attributed the popularity of news blogs as a step in the process of shifting media behaviors and habits, stating:

> If you saw what the public read prior to the crisis and in the end of the 00's, the Greek middle class had as cultural models tabloid and lifestyle magazines. This shifted from magazines and newspapers to blogs. (Personal communication, November 26, 2013)

For others, blogs became popular because they were seen as providing a venue for popular expression that had previously been unavailable to most of the populace. Boubouka described early blogs as "the first major means of organized public expression on the internet" (personal communication, May 31, 2013), while Kapsambelis argued that news blogs "became popular because they offered a space, an opportunity for people, especially younger people, to express themselves and their frustration," adding that "when controlled information becomes overcontrolled information, the alternative [blogs] is preferable, even if more chaotic" (personal communication, October 18, 2013). Christina Fotinaki, a journalist with the Thessaloniki-based

seleo.gr local news portal, credited blogging with the advent of citizen journalism in Greece, stating: "I believe that the beginnings of citizen journalism, in Greece at least…came with the development of the [news] blogs" (personal communication, July 5, 2013).

Nevertheless, there are those who dispute the popularity attained by the various news blogs, such as the aforementioned *Troktiko*, *Press-GR*, and *Fimotro*. According to Epiteidios, it is difficult to objectively ascertain the popularity of these blogs as they do not utilize a standard and commonly accepted set of metrics to measure their audience:

> …[W]e are not sure how really popular are all these blogs…There is sadly a vast number of sites that create traffic with mechanical ways, so we cannot be sure…I tend to be somewhat suspicious about their real popularity…[B]log news sites are popular in Greece but perhaps not as popular as they claim. (Personal communication, July 17, 2013)

Having examined some potential factors accounting for the rapid increase in popularity of Greek news blogs, the next subsection will examine the content and controversy surrounding *Troktiko*, perhaps the most emblematic and popular news blog during the peak of such blogs' popularity.

4.3.3 – The Rise and Fall of *Troktiko*

Perhaps the most emblematic blog of the news blog movement was *Troktiko* ("The Rodent"), which was founded in December 2007. Hosted on blogspot.com, with a simple layout and a continuous stream of postings throughout the day, *Troktiko* began to attract unprecedented amounts of visitors—and unprecedented levels of attention for an online medium in Greece.

One of the notable characteristics of *Troktiko*, which was also shared by many of the other news blogs which emerged, was its anonymity. The identities of the individuals behind the operation of *Troktiko* were not made public, which further fueled controversy and criticism of the blog, including accusations that the blog's editors were using their anonymity to make scathing

and possibly libelous attacks on public figures, political parties and the government. Despite this, *Troktiko* enjoyed extensive popularity.

By 2010, *Troktiko* claimed that it had become the most popular blog in Greece and the most-visited blog hosted on blogspot.com in the world ("Biografia," 2010), an almost unbelievable achievement for a blog based in a country with a population of just over 11 million people. Its success, however, abruptly ended on the early morning of July 19 of that year, when journalist Sokratis Giolias was murdered in an assassination-style attack outside of his home. It was the first time in 25 years that a journalist had been killed in Greece, and responsibility for the attack was claimed by a domestic terrorist group known as the "Revolutionary Sect," in a scathing letter which appeared in the Athens-based daily newspaper *Ta Nea* several days later (Iriotou, 2010). Almost immediately after the attack, it was revealed that Giolias had been the founder of *Troktiko,* and within days, following a series of final postings by each of the bloggers involved with *Troktiko,* the blog ceased operating.

Though his involvement with *Troktiko* was a secret, Giolias was a well-known journalist in Greece, and at the time of his murder he was the general manager of the Thema 98.9 radio station in Athens. Previously, Giolias had worked as the head editor of two investigative television programs, "Kitrinos Typos" ("Yellow Press") and "Zougla" ("Jungle"), both of which were hosted by Makis Triantafillopoulos, one of Greece's most well-known journalists. The relationship between Triantafillopoulos and Giolias soured, and Triantafillopoulos was the target of many of *Troktiko*'s attacks ("Biografia," 2010).

In a content analysis performed for an unpublished study (Nevradakis: 2010), a day's worth of postings from the blog were analyzed. On the randomly-selected date of Sunday, July

11, 2010, 454 postings appeared on *Troktiko*. This amounts to an average of almost 19 postings per hour, and indeed, updates were made all throughout the 24-hour period of this day, with the interval between new postings occasionally being as brief as one minute. The content which appeared was also diverse in terms of subject matter. The day's postings included political and financial news, letters and commentaries submitted by readers, sports news, celebrity gossip, feature articles, international news, offbeat news, as well as commentary on a number of political, economic and social issues of the day. User-submitted breaking news reports from Greece also appeared, as well as satire, jokes, and mundane content such as weather reports. Much of the day's news which was reported on *Troktiko* was, at its face, reported objectively, similarly to any mainstream news outlet, while a notable aspect of the blog's content was the large number of commentaries posted, some of which were written by *Troktiko*'s bloggers, while others were submitted by the blog's readers. Some of the user-submitted content focused on mundane quality-of-life complaints, while some reader submissions were in response to postings submitted by other readers, thus leading to a dialogue taking place through the blog. Finally, there were also numerous postings of a satirical or humorous nature.

A substantial portion of *Troktiko*'s content was reproduced (with attribution) from other blogs, providing horizontal linkages to other locations on the Greek blogosphere. Notably, that some news was also reproduced from mainstream media outlets, including postings featuring the day's newspaper headlines, and short video excerpts from televised news and talk shows.

Though there were no such postings on the particular date studied, *Troktiko* frequently featured postings announcing the launch of new blogs, thus lending further support to other parts of the Greek blogosphere. On many occasions, *Troktiko*'s posted teasers for forthcoming

"bombshells" which were to be posted on the blog later that day. These "bombshells" typically featured allegations of scandals or corruption within the Greek government or the country's business and media elite, and could be said to represent the veiled threats and blackmail that news blogs such as *Troktiko* were frequently accused of. Indeed, one of the hallmarks of *Troktiko* was its tendency to expose many often embarrassing scandals involving prominent politicians, businesspeople, major journalists and other prominent public figures. For instance, in May 2010, *Troktiko* revealed that the husband of Angela Gerekou, a minister in the PASOK government, owed over 5.5 million euros in taxes, leading to Gerekou's resignation ("The fifth estate," 2010). *Troktiko* also made waves not just by exposing scandals, but by often being the first to report on major emerging stories, as was the case in April 2010, when *Troktiko* was the first outlet to report that the Greek government would request an emergency loan from the IMF ("To Troktiko sas enimerose," 2010), signaling the official start of Greece's period of economic oversight.

As with other similar news blogs, perhaps the most controversial aspect of *Troktiko* was its anonymity. The identities of the blog's writers were not publicly known, and the blog faced sharp criticism from the mainstream media and from the political establishment. Several commentaries appeared in major mainstream newspapers, accusing *Troktiko* of being a purveyor of "yellow journalism," of spreading unsubstantiated gossip and innuendo, and decrying its anonymity, claiming that *Troktiko*'s bloggers were able to get away with libelous postings by virtue of hiding their identities and that anonymous reporting could not be equated with responsible journalism (Bartzinopoulos, 2010; Giannarou, 2010b). Some journalists even went as far as to make the argument that Giolias essentially brought his murder upon himself because he chose to maintain his anonymity (Giannarou, 2010a).

According to Gazi, its sensational nature and reputation for revealing hidden information were the primary factors behind its success, in conjunction with Greek cultural traits:

> *Troktiko*…was theoretically a blog which published news content which was not published by other outlets which were considered to be more mainstream. This is what led to its success, that *Troktiko* would reveal a specific story that would not easily be found elsewhere. Greeks, in large part, as a people and society and culture and politically…seek out scandal…[W]e seek out what's hidden under the rug…as we always believe that there is a portion of the truth that we don't know and that we must find out. *Troktiko* was successful on this basis. It's where its success lay. I don't know if *Troktiko* would have been as successful in the United States if it existed there. Probably not. (Personal communication, January 11, 2013)

Similarly, according to Konstantinos Papatheodosiou, the general manager of the Star Radio Network, the murder of Giolias and the demise of *Troktiko* demonstrates that:

> …[A] blog that anybody can create, if it truly operates properly…having secured its popularity from the accurate information it provides, can clash with an entrenched system which may exist on the other side. (Personal communication, October 10, 2013)

Activist and blogger Asteris Masouras, an editor with *Global Voices*, highlighted this apparent clash between *Troktiko* and entrenched power structures, but questioned the ethics of such blogs:

> *Troktiko* was very controversial and is part of a movement of yellow journalism online, based technically on blogs which aren't exactly blogs, because they [operate] completely anonymously, operated by journalists that supposedly do investigative journalism. Others have charged that these blogs are engaging in blackmail. But the fact remains that a journalist was gunned down with 17 bullets in front of his home. That's part of the scene that many journalists deny. (Personal communication, February 23, 2013)

Similarly, attorney and digital rights activist Anthony Broumas pointed out the sensational nature of *Troktiko* and the likelihood that it engaged in some form of blackmail, adding that the blog's low-brow content was reflective of its audience, replicated offline mentalities and the practices of tabloids, adding that the emergence of news blogs led to the decline of personal blogging:

> You had the kind of mentality in blogs that would encounter in tabloids, because many journalists started to have a blog and they started to use this blog for their own career, and there were many tabloid journalists. These people started to dominate the blogosphere,

> which ended up losing its community aspect, because these people were doing this for other reasons…So you had *Troktiko,* which is this specific kind of tabloid journalism… and there is proof of this, by blackmailing. Very low quality stuff. It became very popular. This happened because society does not change when it encounters the internet... You have the same ideas and usual mentalities. (Personal communication, July 3, 2013)

Christina Lardikou, a volunteer with Radiobubble and the Tutorpool initiative, adopted a different view of *Troktiko*'s content, however, and the extent to which it was distinct from mainstream news stories. According to Lardikou, "*Troktiko* was very mainstream," adding "I remember having news from *Troktiko* in Star," referring to the national privately-owned television broadcaster Star Channel (personal communication, February 20, 2013).

4.3.4 – Greek Law and Legal Threats to Online Communication

Troktiko was far from the only news blog to generate controversy. In 2006, the owner of the blog aggregation site "*blogme.gr*," Antonis Tsipropoulos, was arrested because of *links* which appeared on blogme.gr directing visitors to a different blog, "funEL.blogspot.com," where some postings had satirized the controversial Greek televangelist Dimosthenis Liakopoulos (McCarthy, 2006; "O Dimosthenis Liakopoulos," 2009). Because "funEL" was hosted on blogspot.com on servers based in the United States, Liakopoulos was unable to obtain the identity of the owners of that blog without proof of criminal charges being filed, and so he instead filed suit against blogme.gr for merely providing a link to the content which appeared on funEL ("O Dimosthenis Liakopoulos," 2009). Tsipropoulos was eventually acquitted ("Athoos krithike," 2013). According to Masouras (personal communication, February 23, 2013), the initial arrest of Tsipropoulos resulted in a spontaneous online campaign organized by Greek bloggers calling for his release, with 300 blogs republishing a message of support.

A higher profile case involved the aforementioned *Press-GR* blog. In 2008, acting upon criminal charges of blackmail which had been filed against the then-anonymous bloggers who operated *Press-GR* by several prominent media personalities and politicians, police raided the offices of a newspaper where the blog's founder, Andreas Kapsambelis, was employed as an editor, confiscating computer equipment and files. Kapsambelis' home was also searched by the police, although no items were confiscated ("Eisaggeleas kanei efodo," 2008; "Sinelifthisan gia ekviasmo," 2008). Though the anonymity of online communications is protected by law in Greece, prosecutors were able to overcome these protections as a result of the criminal charges which were filed against the blog, which enabled them to execute a search warrant.

According to Kapsambelis, *Press-GR* was the first news blog, the one which opened the door for others which later followed, and was targeted as a result:

> [*Press-GR*] made the internet popular as a source of news. [The raid] occurred because *Press-GR* was targeted. In my estimation…it was the first sign of the unease which the public system was feeling, as things were being written which, even with alterations and mistakes…as one can determine after the fact, broke the barriers of news delivery. (Personal communication, October 18, 2013)

In Kapsambelis' view, the legal troubles blogs like *Press-GR* faced were the result of "the paralysis and turbulence which was fostered, as the public learned about blogs…hundreds or thousands more opened," adding that these efforts were counterproductive: "the public turned to them because it had no other choice" (personal communication, October 18, 2013). This support was referenced by Tsimitakis, who described the support that Kapsambelis received from members of the Greek blogging community following his arrest, even if many disapproved of Kapsambelis' practices in operating *Press-GR*:

> I don't think the police had the right to break in…[s]o we stood by [Kapsambelis'] side, although we hated his content, but we thought we shouldn't have double standards and if

> we were to defend free speech online, then we should do it for anyone" (Personal communication, February 13, 2013).

According to Masouras, the intent on the part of the authorities was not so much to arrest or prosecute Kapsembelis, but to reveal him as the owner of *Press-GR*:

> The anonymity of the editor of the *Press-GR* blog was dropped by pretending it was a blackmail case. Then the blackmail charge was dropped itself, but of course the editor had already been revealed to the public, and this tactic has been repeatedly used and has been condemned by the European Court of Human Rights, not for Greece specifically but in general. (Personal communication, February 23, 2013)

As further clarified by Andriotakis, online anonymity cannot be lifted for libel cases, but *can* be lifted for charges of blackmail. This has resulted in individuals seeking to file charges over material published on the internet to attempt to prove blackmail, in order to reveal the identity of the individual(s) responsible for the posted content (personal communication, May 27, 2013).

At the peak of the popularity of news blogs, there were several legislative and judicial initiatives which sought to outlaw or to limit online anonymity. In 2008, it was reported that the center-right New Democracy government was drafting legislation which would have placed substantial restrictions on bloggers (Asteris Masouras, personal communication, February 23, 2013). The following year, Giorgos Sanidas, the prosecutor of the Greek Supreme Court, the Areios Pagos, published a legal opinion just prior to his retirement which argued that online communications should not be legally protected by the principle of the secrecy of communications (Kalavros-Gousiou, 2009). Notably, *Troktiko* responded by revealing that Sanidas had issued a decision legalizing his allegedly illegally constructed vacation home ("Troktiko enantion Sanida," 2009). Also that year, the then-Minister of Civil Protection Mihalis Hrisohoidis publicly stated his opinion that the anonymity of bloggers should be stripped and that every blog should have a legal representative, arguing that anonymous blogging had led to

several instances of defamation ("Vazei thema," 2009). In 2010, several members of PASOK began to call for the passage of such a law after *Troktiko* falsely reported the impending resignation of the Minister of Education, Anna Diamantopoulou. The government cited the legal opinion issued by Sanidas, as well as a similar proposal then under consideration by the Italian government which would have required bloggers to register ownership of their blogs with the government's Communications Authority ("Nomos gia ta blog," 2010). The Sanidas opinion and proposed legislation in Italy was also cited by Lefteris Avgenakis, a then a member of parliament with New Democracy, who called on the government to pass legislation which would strip the anonymity of bloggers and "restore order" to the blogosphere ("O megas karagiozis," 2010).

As is plainly evident, anonymity was an issue which generated political controversy. This controversy is reflected in the diverging opinions received from individuals interviewed for this study. Several reasons were put forth for defending anonymity, albeit frequently with qualifiers attached. For Fotinaki, anonymity can be abused but it can also provide a voice to the voiceless:

> Certainly anonymity can liberate someone in order to express themselves, and it is a characteristic of the internet…if this freedom is used correctly, I don't consider it a bad thing. But unfortunately it is often abused…I don't believe anonymity is a bad thing, it is a personal choice. If someone wishes to speak eponymously they can do so. Also, anonymity can help those people…who are otherwise afraid to express themselves. (Personal communication, July 5, 2013)

Dimitris Trimis, the president of the Journalists' Union of Athens (ESIEA) sees the journalistic and democratic value in anonymity, even if he believes journalists should operate eponymously:

> I believe that the right to anonymity online must be maintained, even if in many instances, it creates the conditions for slander, for twisting the truth, for spreading fake news. For journalists and journalistic websites and journalistic blogs, I would prefer they had an identity, to take responsibility for what is written and publicized. But for centuries there has been a journalistic tradition of anonymity which has been useful. Therefore I would support this freedom up to a certain point where it becomes criminal, for

> anonymity to remain even if I personally have been harmed by it…but that is the cost of democracy. (Personal communication, May 29, 2013)

Dourou highlighted incidents such as the murder of Giolias, but warned against allowing such incidents to create laws limiting freedom of expression online, instead proposing a balancing act:

> We must be extremely careful because in the name of individuals who might be operating in an undemocratic way…we can't move forward and pass laws which will create an online "Big Brother," to do away with anonymity for ordinary users in the name of online blackmailers…we must strike a democratic balance between what is public and what is private in new and social media. (Personal communication, July 3, 2013)

Blogger Paschalis Aganidis also highlights the need to strike a balance between criminal use under the cloak of anonymity, and its democratic potential:

> I believe that anonymity is not harmful. I am against a general prohibition which would dictate that participation in public dialogue must always be eponymous. There must be a stable and strict framework for those who violate certain ethical standards or criminal laws in the case of blackmail, but the opportunity to participate in the public sphere without sharing your identity is, for me, revolutionary and we must not retreat from this. In regimes which are undemocratic…it is a tool of mobilization and democratization. (Personal communication, December 16, 2012)

Similarly, Costas Efimeros sees the journalistic value in anonymity, highlighting the examples of Wikileaks and whistleblower Edward Snowden. He proposed, however, a certification process for online mediums under the umbrella of ESIEA:

> I am in favor of anonymity openly. Our proposal towards ESIEA…is for ESIEA to adopt a model of certifying online media…I believe that anonymity is extremely useful and this is proven by the Wikileaks case and Edward Snowden…An anonymous party can say things that could not be told on the record, and it must exist and must be…It must be a choice. (Personal communication, July 18, 2013)

On the part of ESIEA, however, the union's general secretary Maria Antoniadou draws a distinction between whistleblowing sites such as Wikileaks, and malicious anonymity:

> On the internet reputations have been ruined and people could not respond because there existed anonymity. We're not talking about Wikileaks and publicizing content from there

> as a form of investigative journalism that is overseen…Here we have anyone who wants to provoke, to destroy, able to write anything… (Personal communication, May 29, 2013)

Along a similar vein, Psara says that in her professional work as a journalist, anonymous information is met with greater skepticism, even if she supports the right of anonymity, stating: "[f]or better or for worse anonymity is a part of the internet and I accept it, with the condition that I cross-check five times more the words of an anonymous user versus one who is eponymous" (personal communication, November 11, 2013). In turn, Andriotakis accepts anonymity but points out that it is inherently limited:

> I came under attack…after publicizing my book, because I took a public stance not against anonymity, but by saying that I do not consider it wise to encourage it. Anonymity is constitutionally protected, but there is no such thing as total anonymity… There are ways to find you even if you consider yourself anonymous…I don't believe anonymity is of help to any public issue. (Personal communication, May 27, 2013)

Many others vociferously opposed online anonymity. Aphrodite Al-Saleh, a former social media volunteer with PASOK, described anonymity as "a force of darkness…[a]nomymity provides the opportunity to do whatever cannot be done in public" (Personal communication, January 11, 2014). Another political figure, Giorgos Katrougalos, at the time an attorney and law professor at Democritus University (and presently a minister with the SYRIZA political party) argued that online anonymity leads to a replication of darker practices of print journalism in Greece:

> I don't support anonymity. I think that it can be a factor of slander, of malign use of information. Unfortunately we have a tradition like that in Greece, not specific to social media, quite the opposite. Some newspapers...had a specialty to blackmail people, saying that if you do not pay us that amount of money we're going to publish something bad about you. So I have a fear that this bad tradition with the bad journalists...can [translate] to [online] media. So I strongly support the non-anonymous appearance of information. (Personal communication, July 2, 2013)

Journalist Paris Karvounopoulos, a reporter with Antenna TV and the *Real News* newspaper, and editor of *onalert.gr*, believed that journalists and websites should always be on the record:

> I may be a traditionalist, but I think that every site and blog has to be identifiable. We [*onalert.gr*] have an identity, everyone knows that *newsit.gr* belongs to [journalist] Nikos Evaggelatos and that onalert.gr belongs to the Evaggelatos Group. I sign off on all my articles every day, I believe that I should be identifiable, and that if someone feels slighted or slandered or was harmed by something that was published, that they can know who to respond to. (Personal communication, June 28, 2013)

Thanasis Heimonas, the head of PASOK's cultural department and a columnist with the *Athens Voice* weekly newspaper, identifies a legal discrepancy, stating "anyone can slander anonymously…and there is no problem, there is a gap in the law" (personal communication, February 15, 2013). Kranidiotis points out that there is a legal disconnect, wherein professional journalists can be held legally liable for something they publish in print or broadcast on television or radio, but the same material is not punishable if published online:

> These blogs weren't just anonymous, they blackmailed and this continues to happen…There is a great anomaly here…If I say something to you in person or publish it in a newspaper or say it on radio or television, I can be criminally tried…If I do the same thing from a Blogspot site and be protected under the veil of anonymity. This has to stop, everything should be eponymous. (Personal communication, December 6, 2013)

Papatheodosiou points out that anonymity is an issue not just for what a journalist or blogger might write, but what any online user might publish as a comment:

> Anyone can start a website or blog with a throwaway e-mail address and a fake name, even if all of this can be traced, but there are ways around this too…You can come in anonymously and criticize a point of view, I can come in a second and third time with different accounts and leave more comments…and make it seem like they are from different users. (Personal communication, October 10, 2013)

A potential compromise – the use of a pseudonym – was also put forth. Augustine Zenakos, the editor of *Unfollow* magazine, presents the issue in this way:

> You encounter a writer in a newspaper. His name is, I don't know, Augustine Zenakos. It doesn't really matter…if it wasn't that, it's something else. Isn't the important thing that through his writing, week after week, that builds a consistent…identity, that you can follow, and through that a kind of presence, a political presence. Strictly speaking, the name is just a legal issue, if they did something and you needed to identify the particular

> physical person and take them to court. As far as public discourse is concerned, you need an identity, not the identity that identifies you as a physical person…a blogger that is stable, identifiable, like Pitsirikos [a prominent Greek blogger], it doesn't matter if his name is Andreas or Giorgos or whatever. His name is Pitsirikos… that's something that you can focus on…it's something that is accountable in terms of public discussion. *Troktiko* isn't. That's one of the problems. (Personal communication, July 19, 2013)

Petros Papathanasiou, a producer with Radiobubble, discusses how pseudonyms are used at his station and how identifiable online names are not as important as some may believe:

> The philosophy of Radiobubble…is to respect pseudonyms. A pseudonym represents an online persona. Many times this may not be our true professional self, but a persona which in many cases is what we prefer to be…many of our producers have created a persona…and tailor this personality to their radio show...Online communication allows people to operate with the idea of an avatar…Of course anyone could be hiding behind a pseudonym and some unscrupulous people may take advantage of this, but using your real identity on the internet is nevertheless meaningless…To give an example from Twitter…many "eponymous" accounts are used by multiple users…the individual photographed is not always the one that is writing, it is often people working for that individual… (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Batzoglou, however, dismisses this view, rejecting even the use of a pseudonym or handle: "the journalistic product must always be eponymous, to be signed off [by its author] and not with the use of a pseudonym, except if your life is in danger" (personal communication, May 24, 2013).

The controversy over anonymity and the attempts, a decade ago, to outlaw or restrict it, reflect a broader trend in which electronic communications in Greece have been targeted. In 2002, a law was *unanimously* passed by the Greek Parliament which was purportedly aimed at outlawing the use of video gambling machines in public places other than casinos, but the law was so overbroad that it effectively banned all electronic games and put arcades and internet cafés at risk of being shut down ("Omofona yperpsifistike," 2002; "Antidroun," 2002). This law was soon overturned by the European Union, which later levied a fine against Greece for not implementing this directive in a timely manner (Stampoglis, 2009). In 2009, soon after the

widespread December 2008 riots which will be examined in the next section, a law was passed which eliminated the anonymity of pre-paid and "pay-as-you-go" cellular phones, requiring owners of these phones to officially register them.

In Mandravelis' view, these legislative attempts reflect the fear of the political system towards new forms of communication: "The first thing on the mind of each government is to find a way to limit social media. They do not understand its nature and can't manage it, so they fear it" (personal communication, June 11, 2013). Andreas Roumeliotis, a former journalist with the *Eleftherotypia* newspaper who is the founder of the enallaktikos.gr civil society web portal, adds:

> If [the politicians] could, they'd do whatever [Turkish president] Erdogan does in Turkey. If it was in their hands, they'd censor the internet. I deeply believe this. Now they simply can't control it. I am certain they don't like it and don't want it. They have a thousand ways to target someone and to destroy them. (Personal communication, April 3, 2014)

Broumas points out that where the state has been most effective in stymieing online speech is not through direct legislation but through indirect actions which create a chilling effect:

> The state has not made an impressive move to cease freedom of expression on the internet. Of course we know that there is a law regulating freedom of expression on the internet, there is a bill that somewhere in the shelves of the Ministry of Justice, but it hasn't surfaced yet. This would be, of course, a censorship law, to suppress freedom, not to give more freedom. But, this has happened in an indirect way. The Greek judicial system and the Greek laws are very conservative in terms of freedom of expression. They have the laws there to use when it is convenient for them. These [wealthy] people have the money to prosecute you. So if you end up going to court, most people that have been imposed in such a situation have closed down their websites. This happened a lot of times. (Personal communication, July 3, 2013)

One potential example of this comes from the arrest of Facebook commentator "Geron Pastitsios," whose name was a play on the name of a famous Greek monk, Geron Paisios, revered by some for his prophecies, and "pastitsio," a famous Greek dish. "Geron Pastitsios" (real name Filippos Loizos) was arrested in 2012 and charged with "malicious blasphemy,"

resulting in an initial 10-month suspended jail sentence and an outcry in the Greek social media sphere. Though he was eventually acquitted ("Athoothike," 2017), Masouras points out: "[I]n the same fortnight we had blasphemy cases in Greece, Saudi Arabia, in Iran I think, and in Egypt. That tells you something about the legal status of how law sees the internet in Greece."

Notably, even though the issue of online anonymity and regulating online speech is today well past its peak, in terms of the controversy that it generates in Greece, a series of recent decisions has addressed several concerns connected to such speech. In an April 2017 ruling by the Areios Pagos, charges of online defamation are written off after five years, as opposed to three years for print defamation ("Sta 5 xronia," 2017). In another recent ruling, the Areios Pagos decided that administrators of websites cannot be held legally liable for the content of comments posted on their sites ("Areios Pagos," 2018). Finally, in 2017, the Greek Ministry of Digital Policy, Telecommunications and Media inaugurated a new service that will detect and report instances of online plagiarism and copyright infringement, in response to rampant complaints about "copy-and-pasting" on news websites ("Digital Policy," 2017).

4.3.5 – Single Issue Advocacy Blogs: The Case of G700

While much attention was directed towards the "news blog phenomenon" in Greece in the years leading up to the economic crisis, and despite the general distinction between news blogs and personal blogs, a third type of blog with an acute impact on the public sphere can be identified: single-issue advocacy blogs.

An example of such a blog was the *G700* blog. Blogger Paschalis Aganidis was one of the founders of this blog. According to Aganidis, the blog was established in 2007, and he described the blog as "the first-ever collectively run political blog in Greece, with a narrow focus

and very specific political content" (personal communication, December 16, 2012). Aganidis describes the impetus for creating the G700 blog as being the low wages which young people faced in the job market. It is out of this issue that the blog's name was symbolically derived, as *G700* represents the "700 euro generation," alluding to the 700 euro monthly wages which many employed young people received at that time. Indeed, according to Aganidis, the blog was founded by individuals representing this generation:

> It was founded by young people who, in their daily lives, experienced the problems of the job market…the minimum wage at the time was 700 euros. The blog placed at the epicenter of public discourse, within which we introduced the issue of intergenerational justice. Our primary objective was to impact the public dialogue, to take advantage of the net route of the blogosphere... (Personal communication, December 16, 2012)

As stated by Aganidis, the original team of bloggers consisted of 15-20 individuals who wrote articles on the blog, an activity which Aganidis described as the "net route." Notably, most pieces were nominally anonymous and were signed off by "the 700 euro generation." Aganidis stated that on occasion, eponymous articles were publicized if the writer of the piece wished to be identified, but Aganidis noted that the team of bloggers was nevertheless not operating in secret, as numerous writers of the blog publicly appeared in the media and spoke at conferences pertaining to new and social media. However, the idea behind the blog was that most articles would be identified as representing the "700 euro generation" rather than any specific individual.

Aganidis noted the rapid popularity the blog enjoyed, which peaked in the 2008-2009 period. During this time, postings on the *G700* blog would receive anywhere between 2,000 and 3,000 comments and thousands of visits and page views per day. Indeed, Aganadis stated that commenting was the primary way in which the public interacted with the blog, via young people who visited the blog to share their own experiences from the job market. Aganidis added a

second means of public participation, a group which was formed by *G700* called "the worker's advocate," which consisted of five young attorneys who specialized in labor law and who were acting on a volunteer basis to handle labor and workplace issues submitted by young persons.

Through the blog, Aganidis noted that a significant degree of networking took place with other similar movements throughout Europe, such as the "G1000 generation" of Italy and Spain. However, one of the most direct contributions of the blog to the Greek public sphere and public discourse in Greece came from the many media appearances and references to the blog in the press[10], which came as a result of the blog's popularity and visibility at the time. Aganidis noted that writers of the *G700* blog were often invited to appear on the mass media, but that the media often attempted to transform *G700* into a personal human interest story:

> The [media] took an interest, but it was a little superficial. For example, I was invited to a televised morning show…the journalists were primarily interested in everyone's personal story…how do you get by? How do you manage to survive?...For the most part they were not interested in…the issue of intergenerational justice…I would talk about the closed economy, the need for reforms, the restricted job market, the lack of connection with universities. This was not of interest…They did not see that behind the G700 name was a political initiative and perspective. (Personal communication, December 16, 2012)

Nevertheless, the influence of the *G700* blog was such that some of its bloggers had the opportunity to meet with the then-President of the Hellenic Republic Karolos Papoulias to raise the concerns of the *G700* generation. According to Aganidis, as a result of this meeting, "[f]or the first time the President of the Republic made a public statement saying that aside from social justice there is an issue of generational justice" (personal communication, December 16, 2012). In addition, *G700* bloggers addressed the Greek Parliament and the European Parliament.

[10] See for instance http://www.kathimerini.gr/304961/article/epikairothta/ellada/emeis-h-genia-twn-700-eyrw-zhtame, published in the *Kathimerini* newspaper (November 18, 2007) and written by a G700 blogger.

In addition to the "net route" of blogging described by Aganidis, the *G700* team also engaged in offline, "crash route" options. One example provided by Aganidis was a successful protest organized via the *G700* blog which took place in the Syntagma Square metro station in central Athens, calling for an expansion of the metro's hours of operation to 2 am on Fridays and Saturdays, in order to accommodate the needs of the youth. According to Aganidis:

> This was the first time that there was a protest with a specific demand and a creative manner in which it was approached. Until that time, and still to this day, protests in Greece consist of a wholesale rejection and complaint…general demands of outrage and remonstrance. Ours was the first time a movement came along and put forth something very specific and very creative. (Personal communication, December 16, 2012)

Another example provided by Aganidis concerns the G700's participation in protests regarding proposed reforms to the social insurance system. Aganidis noted that G700 was not alone in participating but that its participation was quite distinct, reflecting a social democratic ideological perspective. As stated by Aganidis, "while the others were waging a regressive battle and maintaining a defensive stance, demanding no change, we protested and said the reforms are insufficient, we want more reforms. We were successful in infiltrating the public discourse" (personal communication, December 16, 2012).

Despite introducing Twitter and Facebook along the way as complementary tools and as a means for disseminating the blog's material, the blog remained the *G700*'s main vehicle of expression up until the time that it ceased operations, according to Aganidis. This occurred in 2012 and, as stated by Aganidis, was the result of the founders' own generational shift, as many were by that point over 30 years of age, while some had emigrated. Moreover, political blogging was in decline by then, while due to the harsh economic effects of the crisis and the austerity measures that were implemented, "G700" was no longer symbolic, as the "G700" had, in effect,

become a “G300” due to widespread wage cuts. Nevertheless, it could be said that the G700 blog had a palpable impact on public discourse, particularly in terms of raising awareness of the travails of young workers, and it could be said to have helped inspire later initiatives, such as the development of the #aggeliesergasias (“job listings”) hashtag on Twitter in 2013, the creation of Twitter user @dimitrischid. The hashtag remains actively used as of 2018 (“Get a job,” 2013).

4.3.6 – Survey Results: Views on Blogging

The results of the survey questionnaire revealed findings which largely reflect the general sentiments expressed by many of this project’s interviewees with regard to blogging and its impact on the public sphere and public discourse in Greece, including low levels of credibility and a sentiment that news blogs were not independent sources of news, suspicion towards online anonymity but a reluctance to criminalize it, and some impact towards the mass media.

In general, survey respondents believed that the Greek government maintained a negative view of bloggers. This view was held most strongly by newspaper editors and civil society representatives, while members of the European Parliament, on average, claimed that they viewed bloggers highly positively, and highlights a potential disconnect between politicians and society at large. In examining blogs further, news blogs were not widely viewed as a credible source of news and information, particularly (and not surprisingly) among newspaper editors, though credibility scores were low across the three samples. Nevertheless, there was a strong sentiment that such blogs likely contributed to a decline in the popularity of the mainstream media, albeit with a slightly negative impact upon the quality of the news and information received by the Greek populace. Here, the most positive view was held by civil society

representatives, who could be said to be the closest approximation of "ordinary citizens" out of the three sample populations surveyed.

There was very slight support towards the maintenance of the right to anonymity on the internet, which in reality could be said to reflect the divided and polarized opinions which exist on this controversial matter. Notably, newspaper editors were, on average, neutral towards the issue of anonymity, politicians were slightly negative, while civil society representatives were those who favored the maintenance of online anonymity the most. Even opposition to online anonymity was often qualified, however, as a majority of respondents—including newspaper editors—did *not* support a blanket prohibition of anonymous blogs or news articles. This sentiment existed despite a slight tendency for respondents to believe that anonymity diminishes the trustworthiness of a news story. Here, members of the European Parliament displayed the highest degree of mistrust, while newspaper editors and representatives of civil society were slightly positive towards anonymous news content.

Suspicion towards news blogs was also reflected with regards to how their independence from existing power structures was viewed, with a significant majority of respondents, and particularly elected officials and newspaper editors, stating that they did not believe blogs operated truly independently. Perhaps relating to this, and to a likely perception that professional journalists tended to operate news blogs, a slight majority of respondents believed that news blogs were not or probably were not representative examples of citizen journalism, with this sentiment particularly prevalent among newspaper editors. Respondents were, on the whole, neutral regarding their views towards the impact of news blogs on citizen journalism, with

representatives of civil society organizations holding the most positive view, followed by members of the European Parliament and newspaper editors .

In terms of consumption and recognition of news blogs, a large discrepancy was noted between, for instance, elected officials, who stated that they regularly read a very low number of blogs, and civil society representatives, who claimed to regularly read a much larger number of such blogs. The diversity of blogs in existence was reflected in the responses provided to a question asking participants to state up to three blogs which they regularly read, with only three blogs mentioned more than once. This likely reflects the vast diversity and large number of Greek blogs in operation and the lack of any predominant blogs in the post-*Troktiko* era.

4.3.7 – The Decline of News Blogs

There is a general consensus that the popularity of the blogosphere—and news blogs in particular—has waned in Greece in recent years. This decline in popularity is attributed to a number of different factors, including the increased prevalence of social media (such as Facebook and Twitter), the growth of online news portals, difficulty in standing out or attracting an audience due to the plethora of blogs that are operating, an increased sophistication on the part of the audience, and the "mainstreaming" of popular individual bloggers.

For Aganidis, there are three main reasons for the decline: social media, the complete discrediting of the political sphere in Greece post-2009 (in parallel with the start of the economic crisis), and the increased prevalence of "yellow blogs" which engaged in blackmail (personal communication, December 16, 2012). Other respondents, however, focused on social media more exclusively as the main factor in the Greek blogosphere's decline. According to Andriotakis:

> Very quickly once Facebook and especially Twitter began to grow, the decline of blogs began. Some might say it is because they prefer Facebook or Twitter as they do not have to write as much…a few quality bloggers are left, the ones who are the most persistent and focused. (Personal communication, May 27, 2013)

Similarly, blogger and journalist Andreas Panagopoulos attributes the blogosphere's decline to the growth of social media, while hinting at the potential growth of a new literary public sphere:

> The decline of the Greek blogosphere is due in large part to social media, and this is because it's surely easier to write 140 characters than a blog post. Nevertheless, the blogosphere has shifted from a mass phenomenon to one where a few, who either merge social media with their blogging…or who have moved on to a more literary, analytical, or specialized form of writing. The blogosphere scaled down…but generally blogs are not the point of reference they once were. (Personal communication, May 31, 2013)

For Masouras, the decline of the Greek blogosphere was a two-step process, one in which personal bloggers stepped out of the picture, leaving behind news blogs to discredit the medium:

> The majority of social media netizens transcended from bloggers to Twitter and Facebook, so the blogosphere was no more. There is no more blogosphere. I stopped blogging...in 2009 because I was very active in Twitter…I think over time, maybe blogs dropped out of the picture because they felt irrelevant, and also of course because new forms of public communication surfaced, like Twitter and Facebook…The reason why the blogosphere degraded is aggregate. We focused our attentions elsewhere, and the professionals, so to speak, stepped into the picture and in my mind they corrupted the essence of the blog. (Personal communication, February 23, 2013)

Adamidis also sees the decline of blogs as being attributable to a two-step process, but one where online news portals inherited the audience and popularity of news blogs:

> Initially blogs gave Greeks the impression that they were a means to be informed without hidden interests behind the scenes…Eventually, the most well-informed readers realized that other types of interests were hidden behind these blogs…I believe this slowly led to their decline. Subsequently, the need for better information led to the creation of a new series of websites that are more professionalized, have a more serious appearance, and which have an identifiable owner…sites which have the aesthetic of a traditional news portal but also have incorporated a bit of the blog aesthetic, with many anonymous articles or articles based on information garnered from blogs. They were the next step following the decline of blogs… (Personal communication, April 10, 2013)

Social media consultant Panagiotis Papachatzis, a former member of the communications team of PASOK and the interim government of technocrat Loucas Papademos, believes such news portals are directly derived from news blogs:

> Much more professional infotainment websites launched. A crucial moment was when *newsbeast.gr* began…it gave the impression of being credible, without raising the bar too much journalistically. From that point forward several initiatives began which satisfied a portion of the public which sought out this type of news. [Blogs like] *Fimotro* were replaced by portals such as *newsbeast.gr*, *newsbomb.gr*, and *newsit.gr*. In other words, well-known populist journalists entered the picture, and they had no problem operating eponymously…blogs did not decline, they transitioned into such portals. (Personal communication, October 12, 2013)

In turn, Manos Niflis, the editor of enikos.gr, believes that while online news portals inherited the audience of the news blogs, these portals are not directly derived from such blogs, stating that the former reader of news blogs "stayed online but now divides his visits amongst more portals or eponymous blogs…he will seek out a news item from more than one site and that is significant" (personal communication, December 18, 2012). In a follow-up interview, Niflis added his belief that "[p]ortals are not the continuation of blogs. Portals developed from the need for quick and accurate information while allowing the public to judge and to be heard" (personal communication, March 15, 2017).

Skarpelos, while addressing the development of news portals, points out another potential factor in the decline of the blogosphere: the mainstreaming of prominent individual bloggers once they were absorbed by major traditional news outlets, thus losing their original aura:

> Bloggers initially had some credibility, but as they multiplied…the traditional media began to consider the internet an outlet for their material and developed joint newsrooms. It was upon this that individual bloggers such as Pitsirikos and Amalia [Kalyvinou] began to stand out…At some point, traditional media attempted to incorporate visible bloggers such as the example of Pitsirikos joining Skai. I believe this harmed them, because as they were forced to say a lot and attaching a voice to their written word, they lost their autonomy. (Personal communication, May 29, 2013)

Giorgos Apostolopoulos, a former master tutor in journalism at the Donau Universitat of Krems (Austria) and the Athina Research Centre, adopts a similar view, stating: "one who starts out as a truly authentic blogger and expresses truly unique positions but who begins to become more popular, eventually begins to replicate the mass media, by suppressing certain unpopular perspectives in order to gain more followers…" (personal communication, May 24, 2013).

As blogs began to become increasingly popular and their numbers grew, this proliferation may have ended up working against the blogosphere as a whole. According to Kapsambelis, "the biggest enemy of the blogs are themselves…as there are very many" (personal communication, October 18, 2013). Aris Chatzistefanou, a documentary filmmaker, editor of *info-war.gr*, and journalist with the *Efimerida ton Syntakton* newspaper and *Unfollow* magazine, cited the need to be heard as a factor, stating: "Citizens want to have their own blog and gather information and write, which…is very positive, on the other hand, with all this noise of information, it becomes more difficult to find what you are really looking for" (personal communication, June 26, 2013). Lefteris Arvanitis, co-founder of the Thessaloniki-based *alterthess.gr* local news portal and journalist with the *Dromos tis Aristeras* newspaper, cites the failure of news blogs to specialize, saying: "they did not differentiate themselves, other more professional efforts have appeared and overtook them, and the landscape is now different" (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

For others, the decline in the blogosphere's popularity is part of a maturation process on the part of the audience. According to Mandravelis, "the role [of news blogs] was revealed" (personal communication, June 11, 2013), while Kostas Vaxevanis, editor of *Hot Doc* magazine and the *koutipandoras.gr* news portal, stated that while "the frustration of the public and their

need to find real news turned them towards blogs, the public has learned now, has matured…and now understands which blog is playing games" (personal communication, March 6, 2013).

4.3.8 – The Impact of News Blogs

Despite their decline, it is unquestionable that the Greek blogosphere, and news blogs in particular, significantly impacted the Greek public sphere, public discourse, and the mass media to some extent. Their impact is evident in a variety of ways. According to Baltzis, "there have been some occasions where some scandals have been revealed starting from blogs, and then shown on TV…and in the press and then by [the viewers]. So there has been some influence" (personal communication, February 23, 2013). Baltzis may have possibly been referring to a string of scandals which rocked the then-government of New Democracy in 2008, including a sex scandal and attempted suicide involving a highly placed public official, Christos Zahopoulos, which were revealed or at the very least heavily publicized by news blogs such as *Troktiko*.

Another sign of the impact and influence of the blogosphere was the decision of the *Eleftherotypia* newspaper, shortly after its recirculation in early 2013, to hire four of the most popular and recognizable bloggers as regular columnists for its Saturday edition (Aggeliki Boubouka, personal communication, May 31, 2013). Longtime journalist Terrence Quick, a member of parliament with the Independent Greeks political party and the party's press representative, stated that he used blogs extensively as a news source while hosting a nightly talk program on Athens-based television station Kontra Channel in 2010 and 2011, particularly during large-scale protests such as the Indignants' movement of 2011 (personal communication, November 14, 2013). However, Liana Kanelli, a former journalist and member of parliament affiliated with the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) argues that "blogs…destroyed

journalism…You have the distortion of journalism…they turned into conspiracy seekers of the hidden truth" (personal communication, June 11, 2013).

Perhaps the most significant impact of the blogosphere—and the defining moment where the blogosphere in Greece gave way to the burgeoning social media sphere—were the December 2008 riots, which will be covered in the upcoming section.

4.4 – The Impact of Blogs and Social Media on Pre-Crisis Protest Movements

4.4.1 – Introduction

The latter part of the first decade of the 2000s was an increasingly turbulent time in Greece. Just a few years removed from ascension to the Eurozone in 2002 and the hosting of the Olympics in Athens in the summer of 2004, the economic downturn of the latter part of the decade and a series of widely-publicized political scandals began to destabilize in the years leading up to the onset of the country's full-fledged economic crisis. While protests were historically commonplace in Greece, they were typically the result of industrial actions and strikes called by trade unions or grievances of specific social groups, such as farmers. Moreover, in the period following the collapse of Greece's military dictatorship, riots rarely erupted, and were generally limited to minor clashes between students or anarchists with police officers. This began to change in 2007, and blogs and social media played a significant role in this change.

4.4.2 – The Protests of 2007

In the summer of 2007, Greece was ravaged by two sets of major forest fires, one in the Western Peloponnese region and another in the Parnitha mountain range, just north of Athens. Though Greece is no stranger to summer wildfires, the scale and destruction of these two blazes was largely unprecedented, and protests followed.

According to Broumas, the first instance where change was evident in Greece's modern-day public sphere were the protests which followed the fires of 2007. Bloggers and social media played a preeminent role in the development and organization of these protests:

> I was the person who initiated the message for the 2007 demonstrations of the mega fires…It didn't start from one person…I think the first instance that showed this change [in the Greek public sphere] were the 2007 massive demonstrations…We had for the first time a mobilization through the internet without any central political entity behind it…This was made possible through the internet. People…fixed an appointment in the central square of Athens, in Syntagma, at a specific afternoon, and they said that we should all come dressed in black clothes. This was a massive demonstration of 20,000 or 30,000 people. In the second mega fire, which was much bigger, [protests] took place all around Greece…again organized via the internet…Everybody came in black, but everybody came without saying that we are [from a party]... an extraparliamentary party of the left came, but came as in an ordinary demonstration with…their chants [and] banners. They were booed by the people. (Personal communication, July 3, 2013)

Dimitra Dimitrakopoulou, a lecturer in the Department of Journalism at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, noted the role blogs played in encouraging volunteerism directly related to the fires, stating "[t]here was a very big movement organized by volunteers who were formed into a group in order to help the fires get extinguished in Athens…information was communicated through blogs, social media were very active…" (Personal communication, July 5, 2013)

Though the biggest protests of 2007 were those which were organized following the destructive fires of that summer, other protests took place that year which could be said to have played a significant role in the developments which were to follow in Greece in the coming years. Student protests were organized over a change in Article 16 of the higher education law (Zaira Konstantopoulou, personal communication, February 15, 2013), while major protests took place outside the annual speech of the prime minister at the Thessaloniki Trade Fair—a speech similar to the State of the Union address in the United States—in September. Wherlock cites this protest as one of the two transformative events—the other being the December 2008 riots—

which led him to transform the nature of his blogging activity to political activism (personal communication, April 3, 2013). At the Trade Fair protests, Wherlock was beaten and detained by riot police, an incident which was partially captured on video and which was publicized by *The Guardian*, which learned of the story via his blog and Flickr account (Greenslade, 2007).[11]

One final notable protest involved prominent blogger Amalia Kalyvinou. A cancer patient, Amalia became popular in the Greek blogosphere for chronicling instances of corruption and malpractice in the Greek public health system. After her death in 2007, bloggers organized and demanded reforms to the national health system. In Masouras' view, this was the first case of an "apolitical political" protest in Greece (personal communication, February 23, 2013).

4.4.3 – The December 2008 Riots

The riots of December 2008 in Greece which followed the killing of unarmed 15-year old Alexis Grigoropoulos by a police officer at a student demonstration in central Athens on December 8 of that year were unprecedented in both their scope and scale. They occurred not just in Athens but in Thessaloniki and other cities in Greece, and lasted until December 31.

Aside from their severity, what was also notable about the December 2008 riots from a Greek perspective was the role played by social and new media tools, which were used to various extents for the purposes of publicizing news, photos and information about the riots, and for coordinating meeting points and other aspects of the protests themselves. Furthermore, they served as an impetus to bring many individuals who were up until that point not social media users, into this online realm, and in particular the Twittersphere. Despite the fact that Twitter was

[11] See also https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MThrBIWsTHc, http://teacherdudebbq.blogspot.gr/2007/09/beaten-for-taking-this-picture.html, https://www.flickr.com/photos/59089088@N00/1392519221/in/pool-73488111@N00.

not widely used in Greece at the time, the events of December 2008 introduced it to a broader audience, while the #grriots hashtag became associated with the protests ("Poioi Einai," 2012).

According to Tsimitakis, while social media are often used by organized activist groups, a second modern characteristic of their use in relation to social movements is:

> …[A] kind of open activism which organically appears and evolves, without coordination or any kind of pre-condition. That's the example of December 2008…that night people started reporting online what they witnessed…and then they started combining information, discussing it, like a huge open visual news desk. I think that it played a very crucial role in what followed after that. And that happened in the open. It happened a lot faster than any media could actually do it. It was complete, in the sense that it got information from so many sources that couldn't escape anything. In my opinion, it led both to a struggle against the media narrative that was coming from formal institutions, and also it played a huge role in what followed that troubled night, with riots in the streets. There was this sense…that blogs and social media operated from the bottom up and on behalf of the people who were on the ground, while the mainstream media operated from the top down… (Personal communication, February 13, 2013)

Vaxevanis credits social media with revealing to the public the truth about what was transpiring:

> If social media did not exist at that time, to reproduce photographs of the deceased, the witnesses of people who were there and who were indicating that something pre-planned had occurred at that moment, no one would have learned anything, nor would the [police officer] have been imprisoned. (Personal communication, March 6, 2013)

Wherlock, who covered the protests in Thessaloniki for almost a full month, cautions us, however, about giving Twitter more credit than it is due for helping to spark the protests:

> I covered [the protests] for a month. I was down in the streets for a month. Twitter…it's a bit like, you know, what happened in Egypt. Everyone says "ahhh, Twitter revolution!" Twitter is still very much a minority sport…To think that the whole of Greece went up in flames, that you had thousands of people in hundreds of different locations, all because of Twitter is a bit erroneous…people still communicated in traditional ways, they found out about a demo, phoned me, said look, demonstration, will you be there?...A little bit Indymedia, a little bit of blogs. Twitter was more about telling people what was happening, what was already happening. I don't think Twitter was used as much as an organizing tool. I think that more traditional ways of organizing, whether it be a demo or a march… (Personal communication, April 3, 2013)

As noted by Wherlock, Twitter was far from the only online communications medium which was utilized during this period. Masouras emphasizes the role of Facebook while downplaying the importance of Twitter, especially for the youth who participated in the protests:

> Nobody expected the youths to take to the streets in such numbers in 2008, and that was largely due to Facebook. The youth didn't use Twitter. That's very interesting as well. The schoolchildren who went out into the street communicated through Facebook and derided Twitter as a tool used by old people. (Personal communication, February 23, 2013)

Nikos Bakounakis, a journalist with the Sunday edition of the *To Vima* newspaper and a professor of journalism at the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences in Athens, highlighted the role of YouTube during the clashes, stating "YouTube was heavily used. The amateur videos which were immediately being uploaded to YouTube showed us what was happening, including images from the riots, but from the point of view of disseminating information, not from organizing a coherent movement" (personal communication, March 8, 2013). Baltzis highlighted the role that mobile phones and SMS text messaging for the purpose of organizing specific actions related to the protests (personal communication, February 20, 2013), as did Kranidiotis, who also highlights the role played by Athens Indymedia:

> The clashes which followed were coordinated from day one by cellular phones, via mass text messages and also within social networking spaces such as the notorious Indymedia. You had the coordination of illegal acts…which led to pillaging and destruction… coordinated via social networks… (Personal communication, December 6, 2013)

Turning our attention back to Twitter, Wherlock describes how, in his view, Twitter impacted the mainstream media's coverage of the events which were unfolding:

> What Twitter did was allow a national and international audience to follow very quickly, accurately as well, what was happening. This is something the traditional Greek media just couldn't handle at all. I think this is one of the things where Twitter and new media is much, much better than traditional media. (Personal communication, April 3, 2013)

On the topic of mainstream media coverage of the December 2008 protests, Konstantina Zoehrer, a political scientist and social entrepreneur with the "180 Moires" ("180 Degrees") initiative, said: "[t]he riots in 2008, most of the stuff happening in the street was not covered. It was covered afterwards within a very, very strict framework" (personal communication, June 4, 2013). Chatzistefanou argues that the events of 2008 were a turning point for the mass media:

> Before 2008, I would say that Greek media had two different faces. They were at the same time private enterprises that they were interested in some profit, although as I mentioned they were expecting more money from their connection with the state, but they were expecting some money, some direct profits, and that opened some windows of opportunities for alternative voices to be heard. We used to call them sometimes "left-wing alibis." So the media owners were saying that look, we also have this alternative voice, so you cannot [accuse us of] being one-sided. After 2008, I believe that they totally forgot these characteristics of being a private enterprise and they were working more as a propaganda tool. (Personal communication, June 26, 2013)

Zoehrer says that the protests led her to join Twitter, significantly impacting her career as well:

> Essentially it has started my career. I had just started writing, and when we had the riots in December 2008 with the death of the teenager, I was on the streets reporting every day basically, via Twitter. Not blogging but tweeting a lot, shooting photos a lot, providing them to channels like CNN and BBC… (Personal communication, June 4, 2013)

Perhaps most significant of all though was the impact of the December 2008 riots and protests. For Broumas, following the protests organized after the 2007 summer fires, the second major change in the Greek public sphere occurred during the December 2008 protests, leaving behind an indelible impact upon an entire generation of Greek youth in the process:

> The second change in the public sphere was December 2008. This was a change because, first of all, it was triggered, it was ignited through the new media. The old media, the beginning even said that there was no death of teenager Alexandros Grigoropoulos, but the news spread quickly through the alternative media, the new media, and it spread rapidly throughout Greece. This led to the December 2008 revolt in Greece. The revolt changed the public sphere in the way that new kinds of messages reached a…much bigger audience…as a counterpower against the mainstream media. These were very important messages, because they delegitimized the establishment completely. This was

> the time that the establishment lost a whole generation, the young generation. It lost them forever maybe… (Personal communication, July 3, 2013)

4.4.4 – Discussion

The aim of this chapter was to provide a clearer understanding of the context within which social and new media entered the picture in Greece. The preceding examination of the mainstream media landscape from a legal and regulatory perspective demonstrated that Greece's media landscape, and particularly the broadcasting sector, were highly controlled and largely inaccessible to ordinary citizens, with a significant impact on the functioning of the public sphere and public discourse in Greece. This directly addresses RQ1 of this study.

Furthermore, the preceding analysis of Greece's uneven legal framework and legal enforcement as it pertains to broadcasting, and the role of this state of legal uncertainty in helping to foster a crisis of credibility on the part of the Greek populace towards the country's mainstream media outlets, directly addresses RQ3 and subquestion 4.

Examination of the "news blog phenomenon," the content of these blogs, the controversy the generated and the popularity that they achieved allows us to understand what these blogs may have been alternative *to*, and addresses RQ3, subquestions 3 and 4.

In turn, the manner in which these news blogs were supplanted in popularity by social media, and influence of both blogs and social media in fueling major protest movements in Greece in the years immediately preceding the country's protracted economic crisis, was also examined. This relates to RQ2 of this study, and in particular subquestion 2.

Finally, all of the preceding sections, as a whole, provide us with a clearer picture of the political and social climate in Greece leading up to the period being studied, 2011-2017, and an

understanding of the context within which social and new media operated and what they may have been differentiating themselves from, during this time period.

Building upon this contextual background, chapter 5 will examine the Greek public sphere and Greek civil society, the potential contributions of social and new media to the rejuvenation of the public sphere and civil society or the potential development of new alternate public spheres during the crisis, the impact of new media and social media in the development of new spaces of public deliberation, and the contribution and role of social and new media in encouraging new forms of official or unofficial civic organizing during the 2011-2017 period.

Chapter 5: Social and New Media, the Greek Public Sphere, and Greek Civil Society

5.1 – INTRODUCTION

This section will examine the potential impact of social and new media on the Greek public sphere(s) and Greek civil society. The contribution of social and new media to the rejuvenation of the public sphere and civil society and the formation of a new public sphere (or spheres) and new civil society initiatives will be analyzed, as well as the impact of social and new media on public discourse. In addition, the impact of social and new media on existing entities active within civil society and the extent to which these tools are utilized by such organizations will be examined. This section will also seek to determine what is new, if anything, about the post-2011 public sphere and civil society in Greece and how new initiatives and civil society groups may be different from what existed previously and traditionally in Greece.

In the subsection which follows, perspectives will be presented, based on the interviews conducted as part of this study, on how the public sphere operated historically in Greece and what has changed, if anything, during the 2011-2017 time period being studied, directly answering RQ1 of this research project. This will include a focus on such factors as clientelism, the 1947-1949 civil war and societal schisms which might still remain in the present day, cultural traits and the existence of a "polis" or "demos" in modern day Greece, the adoption of social and new media tools and ways in which they have been utilized in order to intervene within the public sphere, and the development of new initiatives during the economic crisis within the public sphere. In addition, results from the electronic survey questionnaires which pertain to the public sphere will be presented and analyzed.

This will be followed by a separate subsection dedicated specifically to civil society in Greece. This section will begin by examining perspectives on how Greek civil society functioned historically, and will then present initiatives which have developed or been established during the 2011-2017 period being studied and the role of social and new media in the development of these organizations and groups. Two illustrative examples will be presented, the case of the Boroume non-governmental organization and the case of the Radiobubble online radio station, which in this chapter will be examined from the perspective of civil society initiatives which were borne out of this station's programming and activity. Finally, results from the electronic survey questionnaires which have to do with civil society will be presented and analyzed.

Following this, the overall impact of social and new media on the Greek public sphere, Greek civil society, and public discourse in Greece during the period of the economic crisis, particularly during the 2011-2017 period being studied, will be analyzed in relation to RQ1.

5.2 – The Transformation of the Greek Public Sphere

5.2.1 – Historical Development of the Greek Public Sphere

As seen in chapter 2, the general consensus which exists within the relevant academic literature views the public sphere in Greece as traditionally having been underdeveloped, when compared to the public sphere in Western Europe and North America. This general consensus was shared—though not unanimously—by the interviewees who participated in this study. Broadly speaking, the commonly held view they expressed regarding the historical existence and development of the public sphere reflected a sphere that was limited and dominated by hegemonic societal actors, such as political parties and the mass media, and often heavily impacted by "diaploki." Others emphasized the unresolved societal differences stemming from

Greece's civil war of 1947-1949. A significant minority, however, expressed the view that there existed two main competing spheres, or that historically a robust public sphere did exist, even if it was different from western notions of this concept.

According to Boubouka, "The space of public discourse was very strictly constructed traditionally. It was controlled by the hegemonic powers in society, meaning political, economic, and business interests…much more so than in most other European countries" (personal communication, May 31, 2013). A similar view was expressed by Tasos Oikonomou, a journalist with the *Kathimerini* newspaper:

> Before 2008 things were rather entrenched. The public sphere consisted of citizens acting within political parties, identifying with political parties…reflecting the positions of political parties in the public dialogue or being represented in the public dialogue via the positions of the political parties, in the press, the television stations, the radio stations. Pre-2008 where did the public sphere exist? Nowhere outside of the mass media. (Personal communication, April 10, 2013)

Kapsambelis also describes a hegemonic, top-down public sphere in which marginalized groups sought any limited opportunity which they could find, in order to be heard:

> For many decades in Greece, the public sphere was confined and dependent, because there were only the state-run mediums and some newspapers. When private broadcasting was permitted, radio and television, the way in which deregulation occurred resulted in media power resting in the hands of an oligopoly. This created many filters in the public discourse and created much pressure on the public at large to a suffocating extent, as it could not be heard. For that reason, collectives, small political parties, ordinary citizens, and young people sought any crack they could find in the system in order to express themselves, and therefore there was a tremendous amount of skepticism towards the official sphere and the information provided by the hegemonic media. (Personal communication, October 18, 2013)

Boubouka describes a public sphere which reflected the clientelist orientation of Greek politics:

> Politics was determined based on petty political interests, partisan norms and party lines. They had nothing to discuss with the public. They simply sold whatever they had to sell, made deals and patronage appointments. Their relationship with the citizens was one of a patron-client. This is changing rapidly. (Personal communication, May 31, 2013)

Tsimitakis argues that these conditions resulted in a societal tolerance for corruption, stating "…in the Greek case, it's pretty obvious that whoever had the power...more or less controlled the public dialogue, therefore the public sphere and Greek society operated in a kind of tolerance towards phenomena like corruption" (personal communication, February 13, 2013). Bakounakis describes the public sphere in Greece as historically having been dominated by the state, but with the existence of a robust press:

> The public sphere historically consisted of a controlled public dialogue via state-run broadcasting, controlled by successive governments and the Ministry of Press. Greece was one of very few countries with such a ministry, only in dictatorial regimes and the Soviet Union prior to its collapse was there such a thing…Public dialogue took place largely through the press, where there was truly a large and free dialogue, despite the fact that most or all newspapers depended on revenues from state advertising…This changed after 1989, when a portion of the public discourse moved to privately-owned television stations and became a spectacle, with assigned roles for the good guy, the bad guy, the leftist, the right winger, the liberal, the moderate, the extremist, the profane. However, in the newspapers and through their columnists a dialogue continued to take place, one that has now broadened with the advent of new media. A large portion of the public discourse has now moved to the new media. (Personal communication, March 8, 2013)

Odysseas Konstantinopoulos, at that time Greece's deputy minister of development and competitiveness and a member of parliament with the PASOK ticket, describes a public sphere where, historically, citizens were able to be heard via political parties:

> The public sphere worked passively for the citizen as public discourse occurred through the mass media, with which the citizen did not have direct contact and communication. To be honest…in the past there was a better effort and better functioning of the political parties…you could be heard. This has waned today for many reasons, and the dialogue has begun to take place via social media. (Personal communication, September 3, 2014)

Vasilis Karakostas, a member of the parliamentary press office of Golden Dawn, described the hegemony of the political parties and mass media in public discourse in blunt terms: "There never existed a public sphere [in Greece]" (personal communication, June 12, 2014).

Apostolopoulos highlights the role of television, both state-run and private, in shaping the public sphere for much of Greece's recent history, with some exceptions:

> The first major change [in the public sphere] came in 1975…there was a two to three year period which approached true pluralism…as political party commentary was prohibited. With PASOK [being elected in 1981] there was a gradual decline, reaching its low point just before the introduction of privately-owned television stations…when private television appeared, there was a surface pluralism but in practice public discourse consisted of the presentation of various factions and was slanted towards hegemonic political tendencies. (Personal communication, May 24, 2013)

Vasilis Hrisos, a volunteer with the mindthecam media initiative, described the role of privately-owned television stations in shaping the public sphere in succinct terms: "A few years back, the public sphere was strictly defined by the agenda that corporate media were pushing, and that was it. You could hear people talking in the bus, they would just talk about the subjects of the news" (personal communication, July 2, 2013). Dourou added that "for my generation, public dialogue occurred via privately-owned television stations" (personal communication, July 3, 2013).

For some, the development of the public sphere in Greece was directly impacted by the social schisms which developed as a result of the civil war of 1947-1949. As stated by Broumas:

> Public dialogue in Greece was never democratic. It was very much polarized dialogue, because of the civil war…So we always had problems of democracy…in the public dialogue. When you speak about the public sphere in Greece, you have to think of it mainly as monologues taking place simultaneously. This is the kind of dialogue we are used to in Greece. Until recently, before the advent of the internet and the information society, public dialogue was confined in the central political scene, in the parliament and in the main political parties. We didn't have strong media and independent media…[we] had dependent media, media that depended on the state and the parties or depended on specific private interests. So these media couldn't give people the venue to speak for themselves. (Personal communication, July 3, 2013)

Katrougalos contends that the civil war's influence led to the formation of a dual public sphere:

> I think the basic characteristic of the public sphere in Greece is that it followed the division of society, especially after the post-civil [war] era. We had a strange phenomenon, not the same as in Western Europe. We had a deeply divided society, an

> almost authoritarian state that did not suffocate completely civil society, but it had resulted to a division of it. We had actually two public spheres: one official, and one, let's say, resistant of the official situation. This did not survive after the fall of the dictatorship, but we can also see in the after the dictatorship era a kind of duality in the social sphere: an official one and a more, let's say, militant one. (Personal communication, July 2, 2013)

Thanos Andritsos, a member of the governing committee of the ANTARSYA (Front of the Greek Anticapitalist Left) political party, describes this "militant" alternative sphere, which existed in opposition to the hegemonic public sphere of the political system and the mainstream media: "[t]here existed a second public sphere, one from below, one mostly from the left, which was mostly that of the social movements, which was clearly much more limited, which addressed far fewer people, but perhaps consisted of stronger ties" (Personal communication, July 23, 2013).

Blogger "Ypopto Mousi" also described a dual public sphere, but one which was divided between the official sphere and the "kafeneio" or café sphere: "In Greece we had the public dialogue that was going on in neighborhoods or coffee shops…and we had another thing, the mainstream dialogue, which were the media: newspapers, TV, radio, and so on. And these two things were not communicating" (personal communication, June 27, 2013). Perhaps highlighting this divide, Zenakos describes his prior experience working at a major newspaper, where interaction with readers was limited: "There was no contact…except the occasional really devoted reader of the newspaper that would send a letter, but that was very, very rare, at least compared to the readership" (personal communication, July 19, 2013). Thanasis Gounaris, co-founder and member of the board of the Pirate Party of Greece, also describes a similar divide:

> Society was divided into two spheres. There was that which we all watched, the traditional media…which often portrayed things as they wanted, often detached from reality, and there was the reality of the sphere where people spoke to each other in "kafeneions," to their friends, families. This was completely different. (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

Conversely, Gazi argues that the Greek public sphere was not underdeveloped, existing instead as a reflection of Greek society, while describing alternate spheres as having been ephemeral in nature, with ephemerality being another theme which will reappear often as part of this study:

> For the most part, I believe that the public sphere in Greece is developed, perhaps overdeveloped…Greeks speak publicly, express their feelings, and considers the public sphere his space to conquer in a way. It's part of the culture of the Greek. This doesn't exist as much in Germany, for instance. The public sphere for Greeks exists in order to be heard. It's part of the identity and culture…[Conversely], alternativeness is not something I would consider to be a characteristic of the Greeks…There were times when the public sphere was restricted, during the civil war or the dictatorship, during which alternate spheres existed… (Personal communication, January 11, 2013)

From a different perspective, Aris Tolios, a member of the political council of the Popular Unity (LAE) political party also arrives at the conclusion that a public sphere historically did function in Greece, reflecting the country's development vis-à-vis the west:

> The truth is that Greek society has transformed itself very rapidly in the 19th century, 20th century from an agrarian society to something that should resemble but never quite resembled modern European societies. In that sense, I think that the public sphere, when you compare it to Western Europe or even the United States or Canada, it's an unfair judgment…[T]his does not necessarily mean that it's less political or less politically radical, not just socially radical. (Personal communication, February 22, 2017)

Georges Contogeorgis, a professor of political science at the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences in Athens, examines the historic roots of public discourse and deliberation within Greek culture. He argues that there are two ways to enforce checks and balances upon government in Greece. The first is direct democracy, which Contogeorgis argues existed within Greek culture until the time of Greece's independence (in 1827) and which operated as a "church of the demos." This was an individualized democratic system where local communities enjoyed a great degree of decision-making ability. When the modern Greek nation state was born, however, this system was purposely supplanted by a clientelist system, converting an individualized nation

into a mass of voters, something it never was before in its history. Contogeorgis adds that the force which could have served as a second check upon government in Greece, the widespread Greek diaspora which largely consisted of a sophisticated urban class outside of modern Greece's borders, was also purposely excluded. According to Contogeorgis, "the nation was not third world, but the state was" (personal communication, December 19, 2016).

5.2.2 – Remnants of the Greek Civil War in the Public Sphere of Greece

Earlier, Broumas and Katrougalos described the impact of the Greek civil war in shaping public discourse in the decades which followed, and in potentially fostering the existence of a parallel alternate public sphere, far detached from the hegemonic public sphere. According to several interviewees, the remnants of the societal schisms which were borne out of the 1947-1949 conflict have remained ingrained in Greek society up until the present time and have contributed to the intense politicization and partisanship apparent in public discourse.

Oikonomou locates the roots of the often polemical nature of Greek public rhetoric to the Greek civil war, but also to country's military dictatorship and the post-junta period:

> A major role [in shaping the public sphere] was the post-dictatorship climate…which was a triumph of liberals, left-leaning movements, the pro-democracy movement…The post-civil war syndrome was never surpassed by Greek society, it simply was transformed. Even today, you will see in reader comments on *Kathimerini* arguments which are derived from civil war rhetoric. The civil war is still a point of reference for today's developments…The right-wing perspective, right-wing ideology, conservative ideology in Greece is incriminated. (Personal communication, April 10, 2013)

Mandravelis argues that this aspect of modern-day Greek society is based on myths, with direct consequences for political speech and political behavior:

> Greek culture, for better or for worse, is filled with myths regarding "resistance." If you read Greek history, there are never any compromises. Everyone resists everything. This mentality asserted itself in the post-civil war era, when the victors unfortunately isolated a large part of Greek society, the left, from sociopolitical life…The result was that this

> created a culture of resistance and non-compromise. Compromise in Greece is considered a terrible thing. Even a dialogue with the "enemy" is considered a terrible thing. This fostered within society a polemical culture, to wage war instead of to discuss. The aftermath of this is evident on social media. (Personal communication, June 11, 2013)

Finally, Panos Kounenakis, a volunteer with Radiobubble, argues that the economic crisis of the past decade has brought all of these old divides back to the forefront:

> Greece is a society [that is] over-politicized. And that defines all the rest…[I]n the 1990s they were saying that there was no division any more. This comes back in our faces and says, there is always going to be a division, how you see the social problems being solved, there is a more left point of view and a more right point of view, which is never going to be extinguished. In Greece, this was more intense than necessary. It was always, there was more division, due to historical facts, as you know, there was a civil war, there was a resistance against the Nazis which was conducted by the communists mostly, a civil war, a dictatorship, and 3-4 decades of anti-communistic hysteria. And of course, what followed [in the] '80s, social-orientated government, which tried to [reinstate] the other half again…The crisis in Greece, the last 8-9 years, has put everything back on the table. (Personal communication, June 13, 2017)

These divides could be said to be reflective of a Greek cultural mentality to passionately discuss politics, and at times to divide up public spaces along partisan lines, as in the case of "kafeneia."

5.2.3 – The Greek Public Sphere and Café Culture

In a 2011 paper, Greek "café culture" was introduced as a defining characteristic of modern Greek culture, both within the country's borders and in diasporic communities around the world, which were direct imitations of cafés one would find in Greece (Nevradakis, 2011: 169-170; Vouyouka-Sereti, 2002: 244, 254-255). The modern-day Greek café could be said to be a direct derivation of the traditional Greek "kafeneio," or coffee shop, a traditionally gendered and male-dominated space which at one time existed in practically every community in Greece, where politics and current events were discussed.

For Gazi, this form of public space is a defining characteristic of modern Greek culture:

> In the eyes of any observer, on a visit to any city or town in Greece, one will understand the primacy of public space. You see this at the cafes, in the squares, on the streets, everywhere. This culture has made its way onto social media now. This space where we are sitting presently [the Filion Café, a historic establishment in central Athens], is a space with a historic tradition where ideas, cultural works, music, cinema, books, theatrical works were born, and we are sitting here at this same table so many years later. (Personal communication, January 11, 2013)

Ioanna Iliadi, a journalist and press adviser to the Ministry of National Defense, describes the "kafeneio" as the traditional expression of a localized public sphere:

> The public sphere in Greece…traditionally was the kafeneio. There every region truly had its own public sphere. In each kafeneio a television set was later installed. What was seen on television was then discussed in the kafeneio. And often the kafeneio was the delivery point for newspapers. (Personal communication, May 26, 2013)

The political role of the "kafeneio" in Greek society was further elaborated upon by Alexandros Theodoridis, co-founder of the Boroume non-governmental organization:

> In the years before the internet was very popular in Greece, you would say that things were discussed in a very local basis. I mean, the typical kafeneio in villages come to my mind, where the member of the parliament would go every weekend to his constituency and speak with people. (Personal communication, December 18, 2012)

In turn, Apostolopoulos describes the partisan nature which often characterized these spaces, referencing "blue and green kafeneions," referring to the colors of the New Democracy and PASOK political parties respectively (personal communication, May 24, 2013).

Notably though, "kafeneio" is a term that can and often is used with derision, at least with reference to standards of political discourse. As explained by Adamidis:

> Public dialogue [in Greece] is always heated and does not submit to many rules. This model, in conjunction with the idiosyncrasies of the Greek people, which are similar in nature, meaning they are used to arguing more with emotion and less with assertions, led to the development of the public sphere along these lines…This is what we call in Greece a "kafeneio-style discussion"…without a set agenda or specified questions, where the rules of debate are never followed… (Personal communication, April 10, 2013)

Panagopoulos also arrives at the same conclusion while highlighting the partisan nature of these coffee hours: “[The public sphere] never functioned. It was a “kafeneio,” a coffee shop, the continuation of the agora, where the newspapers were read. There were the coffee shops of the socialists, the rightists, the leftists” (personal communication, May 31, 2013).

5.2.4 – Social Media Enters the Picture

5.2.4.1 – Impact of Social Media

Amongst the individuals interviews, a wildly diverse range of thoughts and opinions was expressed regarding the impact of social and new media tools upon the public sphere and public discourse in Greece during the years of the economic crisis. For many, the influence of social media has been both significant and positive, empowering citizens, influencing public dialogue, and filling an existing void left by traditional media. Some respondents highlighted the impact of social and new media on news coverage provided by traditional media outlets, and their role in bringing previously little-known issues into the mainstream. For others, social and new media served as a release valve for frustrated and angry citizens during the crisis years, while providing a voice and means of public expression for the previously voiceless and to marginalized groups. Still others believe that social media merely reproduced the previous dual hegemonic and unofficial spheres, or are simply less influential than believed.

Niflis describes social media as “the number one medium of influence in Greece today,” (personal communication, December 18, 2012), while according to Boubouka, "[w]hat changed most sharply and what is changing most rapidly is…from the moment that the public began to be active and to express itself online, it has slowly begun to conquer a significant percentage of the public discourse” (personal communication, May 31, 2013).

Efimeros stresses the role of social and new media in filling a void that mainstream media had left in Greece, in terms of providing news and information:

> For me, social media *are* the news at this time. I believe that social media are today's newspaper…In Greece specifically, they have taken on a burden of news reporting and true journalism that has not been taken by professional journalists…When journalists themselves aren't covering the news, there will be citizens who…will dedicate their own time to fill this gap. At this time, Twitter and Facebook have taken on a much bigger burden from that which I believe they should have…because mainstream Greek journalism lacks seriousness. (Personal communication, July 18, 2013)

Niflis, on the other hand, argues that social media "now influence traditional media…a video [documenting a newsworthy event] will first go online, will go viral, and then conventional television will be forced to broadcast it, radio will be forced to report it, and newspapers will be forced to publish photographs" (personal communication, December 18, 2012).

Sofia Apostolia, a producer with Radiobubble and web editor for the Greek division of Doctors Without Borders, connects this influence of social media on the mainstream media with the "mainstreaming" of previously lesser-known social initiatives. Referencing the mining activities in Skouries and the "No Middlemen" (or "Potato") movement[12], Apostolia states:

> All the movements now, even the potato movement last year, the information about that was mainly transmitted through social media and you see a lot of news right now that you have first seen on social media and the into the mainstream media. Skouries is another example…You see how something that has been in social media for a long time, eventually it crosses over to the mainstream. (Personal communication, March 6, 2013)

Similarly, Ypopto Mousi argues that the biggest impact of social and new media has been to provide a voice to those who previously did not have an outlet where they could be heard:

> People that didn't have any voice before, now they do. And actually there are people who should have a voice, but the existent system didn't let them. So using the social medium that makes you have an impact on public dialogue, is a way of speaking up, of having a

[12] See http://www.greektv.com/how-can-the-social-economy-transform-greece-an-interview-with-panagiotis-oikonomidis-of-the-no-middlemen-movement/.

> voice, and it's a way of being exposed and criticizing and being criticized. And that's the meaning of the public dialogue. (Personal communication, June 27, 2013)

Fotinaki argues that this has had an empowering effect on segments of Greek society:

> A person who in the past may have felt that they were powerless and without a means to be heard, and may have been resigned to not being heard, now through social and new media, even these people…have a wide open door to actively participate [in the public sphere]. This has been a game changer, because it has activated people who may have been indifferent in the past. It has encouraged them to become more actively involved in society and issues of concern to society. (Personal communication, July 5, 2013)

An additional empowering role is attributed to the use of informal language, which is accessible to a wider swath of the population. As stated by Amalia Zepou, an adviser to the Mayor of Athens Giorgos Kaminis on civil society networking:

> …[T]he way that these people communicate between them and the kind of language that social media like Facebook allows you to use, is very different from the official Greek language…There is a kind of official way of saying things and an informal way of saying things. The informal way has never had so much [space] as it has had lately through social media. People can communicate between them in the way they talk orally. I think that has given a kind of unconscious self-confidence to the way people act…[It] has given the self-confidence and helped new kinds of relationships to progress and to step into the public sphere. (Personal communication, January 11, 2014)

Boubouka highlights the role of commenting in helping citizens vent their frustration at the time of the onset of the crisis, but notes that commenting activity later waned:

> Compared to a year and a half ago…there has been a change in the stance of the public… My colleagues and I have noted that people who in the first year of the crisis actively commented on our articles, even in a vulgar manner…are now refraining from doing so, and this is something that concerns us, this withdrawal from commenting…We believe that this has to do with the public…reading the news, getting informed, but choosing not to lose their time arguing or cursing online. They will get informed and then we don't know what they do afterward. (Personal communication, May 31, 2013)

Niflis attributes to social and new media the role of serving as a release valve for frustrated and angry citizens during the crisis years:

> In the years of the crisis and memorandums, public dialogue has become more intense on social media…due to the anger of the Greeks regarding the difficulties they faced… Internet users increased sharply and the reason was that people wanted to express themselves and the problems they faced. (Personal communication, March 15, 2017)

Vicky Foteinou, a volunteer with the Boroume non-governmental organization, argues that social media's role as a release valve was particularly evident amongst the youth: "Young people use social media in order to express their anger about the political environment, about the political situation and spread it…to the society" (personal communication, December 14, 2012). For Epiteidios, social media served as a different kind of release valve, providing an escape for a troubled populace: "Sometimes, people go to social media to get away from [discussions about the crisis], because you can talk about other things and not feel so depressed" (personal communication, July 17, 2013). For Gazi though, social media provided a new space for public discourse during the crisis, for people that could no longer afford to participate in Greece's café culture: "[i]n recent years Greeks have become more introverted due to financial factors, but there is social media serving as an outlet" (personal communication, January 11, 2013).

Christina Tachiaou, a journalist with the *protagon.gr* news and opinion portal, connects the longstanding societal divides Greeks felt, longstanding clientelism and the end of the period of economic prosperity, with the growth in online public dialogue:

> There are very few decades that Greece has been calm. We shouldn't forget that in this country, until 1974, democracy was something very fragile, and we had wars, we had the junta, From there until the crisis we had been trying to find a new country to live in democratically and how to live together. Money was conquering everything, because we were not poor…from a poor country, we [were] among the richest countries in the world. As long as money was covering everything, we all knew that public dialogue was a kind of a zoo….the public dialogue was a kind of blackmail in order to keep privileges…After the crisis, it was the first time that we realized that we don't know what kind of country we want…so now we are trying to have some public dialogue for the first time, I think, a real dialogue. (Personal communication, February 23, 2013)

For Theodoridis, however, far from serving an empowering role, social media have simply created an echo chamber, where people choose to surround themselves only with people and with news they already agree with:

> Specifically in Greece I remember in 2015, the summer when the referendum happened, I remember lots of people writing on Facebook…[users would say] everybody who was against my position, I will cut them out of my timeline and I will leave them. And practically if they have done this, what they actually did was to even enlarge the echo chamber or make it more closed…we like to listen to our own views and opinions, we feel that this empowers us, but it's not true (Personal communication, January 27, 2017)

This could be seen as fostering the reproduction of dual, competing public spheres which do not interact with each other. Panagiotis Oikonomou, a producer with Radiobubble, states: "[d]ay-to-day life in Greece, especially on Twitter and Facebook, is much different from the day-to-day life of the average Greek who watches television" (personal communication, February 13, 2013). Lardikou adds "I think the discussion stays in small groups…in my opinion the biggest part of the population learns about the news from the mainstream media" (personal communication, February 20, 2013). Epiteidios, in turn, downplays the impact of social media in public discourse, highlighting what could be described as reverse reproduction:

> I'm afraid I don't believe they have a large impact. Most of the people who use social media do it because they are social. There the main content is what their friends say and do, not the politics. We haven't seen many initiatives starting from Facebook, which is the most popular, and none of them has gone to become something really big…mostly I think it's the traditional media or the large websites that give more clout to Facebook. For example, recently there were some racist, there was the case a Greek of Nigerian origin basketball player [Giannis Antetokounmpo] who became the best Greek basketball player in the NBA…and the [Golden Dawn] leader said that okay, you can have a name with a Greek flag but that does not make him Greek. There were some…parodies about what he said in Facebook, but most people learned about them from traditional websites referring to what was said in Facebook. Social media have an appeal of their own which may not be very great, but since what happens there is often republished and transmitted…in the media, their importance increases" (Personal communication, July 17, 2013)

In the view of Tasos Oikonomou, this means that there is not a separate online sphere:

> I would say that the online public sphere appears as a closed communication environment but isn't under any circumstances…If there is an academic view that it is a closed system of dialogue that serves as a counterweight to the real public sphere, that is an incorrect approach…That which today is part of the public electronic dialogue will tomorrow be a part of the public dialogue at large. A television station, a radio station, a newspaper will report it. These remain the mediums through which public dialogue occurs. There is nothing else. (Personal communication, April 10, 2013)

Tasos Krommydas, a member of the executive committee of the Green Party of Greece, believes that social media's impact on the public sphere has been marginal at best:

> Of course there is an impact in the public dialogue, but I think it's still marginal, at least in Greece. The users in Greece that use the social media in order to influence the public dialogue is a very small minority, so I would say that most of these impacts are in a microcosm of these users. The public sphere in Greece is still influenced mainly by the parties…and traditional media (Personal communication, October 16, 2013)

Contogeorgis argues that the "technonet," as he calls the internet, has merely shifted offline political activity online, without impacting the activity itself: "[t]he technonet has contributed to the shifting of sociopolitical activity, of non-institutional activity, from the physical sphere to the network sphere. But the politics in the technosphere remain the same with those which develop in the physical sphere" (personal communication, December 19, 2016). Finally, Yalourakis stated his belief that social media in Greece were still at a nascent level of influence: "[s]ocial media in Greece are still in their infancy…From a scale of 1 to 100, I would say that their impact is at 50 or 60, but this is trending upwards" (personal communication, December 15, 2012).

5.2.4.2 – Greek Cultural Mentalities and Public Discourse

A cultural characteristic noted by several interviewees with regard to how the Greek people may have embraced social media for political expression, is the intense politicization and extroverted nature of the Greeks. This is stated succinctly by Gregory Farmakis, a candidate with the "Dimokratiki Simmahia" ("Democratic Alliance") party in the 2012 parliamentary elections:

"Greeks breathe and speak politics all the time, you could speak politics with your friends at a café or in the workplace. Now you have another 10 or 20 friends who you discuss politics with on Facebook" (personal communication, April 15, 2013). Contogeorgis makes a similar argument, pointing out that "[a] difference between the Western citizen and the Greek citizen is that the Greek citizen is much more politicized," adding that this contributes to intense doubt towards official institutions that would not exist even under similar conditions in the north (personal communication, December 19, 2016).

For some, this mentality is deeply rooted and ingrained in the Greek culture. Vasilis Vasilopoulos, at the time deputy director of ERT's multimedia department, describes the cultural mentality of the Greek people as such: "[in] Greece, sociological conditions create people who externalize that which they are thinking, feeling, and wish to express" (personal communication, June 5, 2013), while according to Gazi, "[e]veryone in Greece wants to be an opinion leader…to write their opinion, to express their point of view…to find supporters for their point of view, and I believe that this need is met in Greece by social media" (personal communication, January 11, 2013). Katerina Tsatsaroni, then a communications adviser with the Independent Greeks political party, describes this as a mentality with ancient roots:

> We have done this since antiquity…Greeks have again found a way to participate actively and intensively in day-to-day life, to feel that he is participating… [and] shaping politics. I believe this manner of communicating and participating in politics is in the blood of the Greeks and they enjoy it very much. (Personal communication, October 13, 2013)

Dimitris Vazouras, a retired banker with the National Bank of Greece, adopts a different view however, arguing that public discourse in Greece was always anarchic: "public discourse as it developed in Greece was always messy…there were no rules…There never existed a culture of socialization in Greece, nor does it exist today" (personal communication, May 31, 2013).

5.2.4.3 – Personal Usage of Social Media and the Facebook-Twitter Divide

Some insightful feedback was provided by interviewees with regard to how they personally utilize and incorporate social media in their own lives and professions. Several journalists noted that they do *not* maintain personal social media accounts, but instead utilize it only as part of their professional work. Tsimitakis maintains a very active social media presence, including accounts on Twitter, Facebook, and Foursquare, in addition to blogging on several different websites (personal communication, February 13, 2013). For Heimonas, Facebook has become his initial go-to source for news: "[n]owadays, when I wake up, whereas in the past I'd open the television or purchase a newspaper, now I log in to Facebook to see what has happened" (personal communication, February 15, 2013).

Activist and blogger Katerina Moutsatsou, a former actress, highlights the role of social media in her life for monitoring and confirming information:

> I follow a wide range of people daily…after the year and a half that I've been doing this and that I've been really into social media for politics, the filtering is automatic. I follow them very closely and what I find is primary information. I love citizen journalism… whoever is on the ground reporting something, posting a picture, posting a video. This is what I am looking for when I go on Twitter…and if you've been on Twitter for a while you know who they are, so eventually you'll be attracted to them more than others. But I do not exclude anyone. I like to follow…even with people that I completely disagree with…because it always gets confirmed that they write from a specific angle. (Personal communication, February 9, 2013)

Kranidiotis states that while he uses both Facebook and Twitter, he is not as active on these networks as people think he is, noting that his main objective is to share his articles from the *Dimokratia* newspaper and antinews.gr, adding that he will occasionally comment or engage in dialogue on issues he considers significant (personal communication, December 6, 2013).

For some journalists, their social media activity was exclusively or mostly restricted to professional use. As stated by Arvanitis, "my relationship with social media is not personal, only professional…I do not have a personal Facebook account and only recently did I create a Twitter account" (personal communication, July 4, 2013). Batzoglou mentioned no personal social media use, utilizing these tools only for finding information (personal communication, May 24, 2013).

On the other hand, Psara noted that she combines her personal social media accounts with her journalistic accounts, stating:

> I must be one of the few journalists in Greece who have a [personal] Facebook and Twitter…I found that Twitter, especially, is an excellent tool for journalists…But what is also important is for someone to find me and tell me "I have this information"…or to criticize me for a report…or to find me on Twitter to congratulate me. (Personal communication, November 11, 2013)

Facebook's high popularity in Greece was noted by some. Theodoridis described Greeks as "the most energetic users of Facebook" (personal communication, December 18, 2012), while Alex Hobson, the then-head of new media for the Skai Media Group states: "Facebook usage in Greece is just enormous," while also pointing out the popularity of YouTube in Greece as well: "I was reading this statistics for the use of YouTube across the globe...number one was, I think, Saudi Arabia, and then number two was Greece" (personal communication, April 9, 2013).

Also of interest are ways in which respondents described the differences between Twitter and Facebook with regard to their role in the Greek public sphere. Psara says that "Twitter is what is used more for 'public deliberation'…[acting as a] global sphere. Facebook…is a more personalized and friendly medium" (personal communication, November 11, 2013). Tolios says that Facebook is about "impressions" while Twitter is about "information" and the ability to publish "in 140 characters a solid piece of information…" (personal communication, February

22, 2017), while according to Masouras, "[p]eople use Facebook to...organize campaigns and Twitter to publicize them" (personal communication, February 23, 2013).

Several respondents expressed a clear preference for Twitter and the discourse which occurs via that medium. Farmakis states: "My personal preference is Twitter. I love Twitter because of its brevity and incisiveness. Facebook is more verbose. But I think that Facebook is really more far-reaching than Twitter, or even a blog" (personal communication, April 15, 2013). Ypopto Mousi adds "[Twitter users are on] a different level than Facebook users…Even though there are less users, they are more...qualitative, they are more influential, they do public deeds, they work in movements and so on" (personal communication, June 27, 2013). Panagopoulos adds his view that "Facebook is for the many, Twitter is for those who truly care about information. It is more journalistic, Facebook is more abstract" (personal communication, May 31, 2013). Boubouka states that the two social networks have "two different audiences," adding that "people who care about news are n Twitter, whereas on Facebook the expression of anger or rage…is more evident" (personal communication, May 31, 2013). Maria Kanellopoulou, founder of the "Save Greek Water" initiative and a member of the mindthecam media initiative, highlights the role Twitter has played in disseminating previously unknown news stories in Greece, such as the shooting of migrant farm workers in the Manolada region, stating that "Twitter has this virality which is not exactly the same with Facebook" (personal communication, October 3, 2013). Lardikou notes that Twitter is more of a closed community, stating "Twitter is mostly for the people who are in Twitter. I don't think that someone that doesn't know Twitter very well will get into Twitter just to check without having an account or being active" (personal communication, February 20, 2013), while Giorgos Christoforidis,

publisher of the *To Xoni* newspaper, notes that "Twitter is not very well developed in Greece, much less so than Facebook. And on Twitter…it helps that there are less people, communication is more personalized" (personal communication, May 27, 2013).

Conversely, Kostas Giannakidis, editor of the protagon.gr news and opinion portal, describes Twitter as a left-oriented "kingdom of trolls" (personal communication, April 5, 2013), while Al-Saleh describes Twitter as being more vulnerable to bullying and trolling, adding her view that "Facebook is a much more democratic organ because discussion takes place, whereas on Twitter with the 140 characters you have to make a wisecrack, and the more crude it is, the more retweets you will get" (personal communication, January 11, 2014). Giorgos Palamarizis, IT director and head of new media for the Democratic Left (DIMAR) political party, adds: "[b]ecause Facebook does not have a 140 character limit, you can develop a dialogue. Certainly Twitter gives you the ability to quickly find information, but the space where most campaigns now take place is Facebook" (personal communication, October 4, 2013).

One final notable perspective comes from Dimitra Iordanoglou, assistant professor in the Department of Communication, Media and Culture at the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, regarding social media use by the youth, noting: "The younger generations are more fluent, use social media a lot to express opinions…and to state their *disinterest* in politics. In general that generation is apolitical" (personal communication, May 29, 2013).

5.2.5 – New Initiatives and Interventions within the Greek Public Sphere

In the years of the economic crisis in Greece, including the 2011-2017 time period specifically being studied, there were a number of new initiatives and interventions which sought to impact the Greek public sphere. These include new e-governance initiatives, boycotts which

were organized online, crowdfunding efforts for the production of crisis-related documentaries, and political interventions involving the use of satire and social media.

5.2.5.1 – E-Governance Initiatives in Greece

Prior to the onset of the economic crisis in Greece, e-governance and digital government transparency initiatives were introduced by the then-government of PASOK led by Prime Minister Giorgos Papandreou. As described by Masouras:

> [PASOK] were the first to openly try to conquer the online space…they tried to promote the idea of accountability through open data, and that was very vocally promoted through the same mechanism that, for instance, the open source community tries to promote openness…After the austerity memorandums were signed and the government collapsed, they have been quiescent… (Personal communication, February 23, 2013)

Giorgos Karamanolis, Chief Technical Officer and Chief Information Officer at the Crowdpolicy consulting firm and former Information and Communications Technology consultant and project manager for the Greek government, described three main e-governance initiatives put forth at that time by the PASOK government. One such effort was the "*Diavgeia*" online portal where all government decisions, from laws to hirings and appointments, are publicized. According to Karamanolis, this was the result of PASOK's efforts to create internal volunteer-based committees that were tasked with developing new initiatives to promote transparency and participatory governance (personal communication, October 13, 2013).

A second initiative described by Karamanolis is *opengov.gr*, which he describes as:

> [A]n effort to provide a platform where there would be dialogue and deliberation on government policy and proposed legislation. The challenge was how to incorporate citizen participation, how their feedback would be incorporated into a final draft law which would be voted upon in Parliament, and the need for a follow-up regarding what feedback was taken under consideration…this way you "debug" the draft law and identify mistakes. (Personal communication, October 13, 2013)

In addition, Karamanolis mentioned a yet-to-be-enforced law passed by the then-PASOK government for electronic governance, "which emphasizes citizen participation. For example, it foresaw a means through which citizens could share their experiences with public services and for those services to respond and improve…There were some issues and delays implementing this law but it remains active…" (personal communication, October 13, 2013).

Papachatzis, who was also involved in the then-government's e-governance initiatives, described some additional efforts which developed during that period. Papachatzis noted that "we initially determined that there was nothing in place regarding accountability in the prime minister's office" (personal communication, October 12, 2013). This resulted in efforts to redesign the website of the Office of the Prime Minister, to include archival material of all former prime ministers (a project which was never completed), and to develop the social media accounts of the Office of the Prime Minister, and the website. Papachatzis noted that, institutionally, the Prime Minister's office in Greece is not as strong as the White House or the Office of the President in the United States, and therefore efforts were made to increase its institutional presence within Greek society. He added one additional initiative which was developed during this period, *government.gov.gr*, which was intended to "gather as many public services as possible on one website, and then to replace the separate websites of each ministry. According to Papachatzis, this would alleviate a recurring problem where after each new government took office, new ministries would be created, others would be dissolved, and others would be renamed or merged, creating problems with their websites and their visibility.

Another initiative of the then-government of PASOK was described by Vlachos: "I

launched Startup Greece[13] with my team at the Development Ministry, which intended to reach young citizens and entrepreneurs, citizens who wanted transparency and collaboration, in order to develop a new notion of the public sector" (personal communication, November 26, 2013).

Notably, just as Karamanolis noted the failure of the citizen participation law to be implemented, Papachatzis stated that after the collapse of the Papandreou government in 2011, the website of the Prime Minister's Office was "taken apart," the Prime Minister's Twitter account ceased to be updated, while the government.gov.gr project was never fully completed (personal communication, October 12, 2013). Despite this, however, Papachatzis noted the popularity of initiatives such as "*Diavgeia*," as evidenced by the following example:

> "*Diavgeia*" is another example of an initiative which developed due to citizen demands for accountability and transparency. This was evident recently when [the then-coalition government of New Democracy and PASOK] attempted to abolish "*Diavgeia*." Just the suspicion this was about to happen fueled a wave of complaints, which resulted in [the bill's] restructuring… (Personal communication, October 12, 2013)

Well-intentioned as these e-governance initiatives may have been, there were some who called them into question, on the basis of successive government's practices during the economic crisis, and also on the basis of the digital divide in Greece. In the words of Thanos Andritsos:

> When the government creates "*Diavgeia*" supposedly to encourage citizen participation... but at the same time they are passing laws which abolish every regulatory framework from everywhere and laws are passed by executive degree, when the new government does not even have a vote of confidence and still governs and does whatever it wants… some silly website and the supposed "information society" and "participation" means nothing, particularly for the poor. (Personal communication, July 23, 2013)

Gounaris addresses the ineffectiveness of these initiatives in light of the existing digital divide:

> [These initiatives] were implemented in a country that wasn't ready. In a country that was not ready for this and which does not have the infrastructure, you have to help the citizens participate in something like this. What use is it to create e-governance without the public having the ability to participate? (Personal communication, October 8, 2013)

[13] See http://www.startupgreece.gov.gr.

Nevertheless, e-governance initiatives have continued to be introduced in Greece to some extent. For instance, in 2017, a new online platform for reporting instances of corruption was inaugurated by the General Secretariat for Combating Corruption ("Kataggelies," 2017).

5.2.5.2 – Online Boycotts

In April 2013, a backlash followed the broadcast of a popular television talk program, "Eleftheros Skopeftis" ("Sniper"), hosted by well-known journalist Giorgos Tragkas and aired on Skai TV, where members of the Golden Dawn political party were interviewed. This was at a time where Golden Dawn was facing accusations of operating as a criminal organization.

The outcry which followed led blogger Ypopto Mousi to organize, via his blog[14] and Twitter account and utilizing the #xa_advertising hashtag, a boycott of advertisers of the "Eleftheros Skopeftis" program. In his words:

> There was a television show that invited some members of the Golden Dawn far-right party. Far-right is a very light characterization. They are mostly neo-Nazis, but [Tragkas] called them and he tried to make an image of everyday people that are tired of what's going on in politics…I thought, wait a minute, what's going on? What's the main value of our society now? Money. So who is giving money to that guy to make these shows? The companies that are getting advertised. So I said, let's make them feel regret…So I started organizing it and I asked people to make a letter, they did, they sent me one or two letters that were for these companies that got advertised there. I made a blog post where I said "Dear companies, how do you feel about being advertised in a neo-Nazi washing machine?"… [E]ngagement was very big, and lots of people tried to send mails and tweets and so on, and the companies started apologizing…saying "we didn't know what the show would be, we didn't know the theme, we didn't know the guys that were called there," and so on. That was a bit of a victory because we made these companies apologize, and the biggest victory was that one of them, a supermarket chain, said that they wouldn't…give any more money to that show. The thing that came out of all that you can connect offline with online in a way that digital activism can go on in the actual physical environment. (Personal communication, June 27, 2013)

[14] See https://ypoptomousi.wordpress.com/2013/04/11/.

Social media consultant Stratos Safioleas took part in the #xa_advertising campaign, transferring his knowledge from his experience lobbying in the United States. According to Safioleas:

> I thought it was tremendous…the fact that a few advertisers pulled out, if you look at that specific show, the economic impact of this, is not tremendous…but it signals what I hope is the beginning of a sense that we are not just consumers, we are not just voters, but we can be participants in the political play and we can affect with our money and the way we spend our money, in coordination with others, how business is behaving, politically, morally…The campaign was not a campaign of complaint. It was a campaign for action, in a very specific fashion and this campaign resulted in some very impressive results… We knew that if we pressed in that direction, [advertisers] would back off, and they did… You cannot have everything at once, there was no follow-up, but I think there is a lesson here. My sense and what I have learnt in the U.S. is the following: maybe your actions don't necessarily bring the results that you need…at least a public apology and so forth. But what you definitely do is make every similar action much more expensive, so the next time…he will be much more hesitant to take this course of action. It takes a little bit of training of the society to understand that it's a weapon that is quite potent if they can use it properly. So I expect this to increase, and I think it will be only a good thing if it happens. (Personal communication, July 10, 2013)

According to Mousi, the #xa_advertising boycott was so successful that a follow-up campaign was soon organized following an incident where migrant farm workers picking strawberries were shot in the Manolada region of Greece. Utilizing the #blood_strawberries hashtag on Twitter, Ypopto Mousi organized this new campaign. In his words:

> It was the same thing…saying to the companies that, do they know that this guy they are working with handles his business in that way and so on? And the companies started again answering and apologizing, and, that publicity, it was another victory, I believe. Because I used to be in that business environment, I can see how cautious they are getting. They are trying to be very correct in their activities, and that's good. They need to know that we are watching. (Personal communication, June 27, 2013)

As stated by Olivier Drot, editor of *okeanews.gr*, a French-language website and blog with news from Greece, online campaigns such as this are significant even if people do not actively protest:

> It has an impact because people are talking. They may not be gathering, but they are organizing…and this for me is the most important thing in Greece today. The alternatives that people are creating and they are talking about with social media… worked very well, so I think now it is another way to resist. (Personal communication, May 24, 2013)

5.2.5.3 – Crowdfunded Initiatives

It could be said that the protracted economic crisis in Greece served as the impetus for a form of collective production which was up until that point largely new for Greek society: crowdfunding. In the Greek context, crowdfunding is perhaps best exemplified by three documentary films produced by Aris Chatzistefanou, a longtime journalist turned filmmaker: *Debtocracy*, *Catastroika,* and *Fascism, Inc*.[15] As the titles of these three documentaries suggest, the inspiration for these films was the economic crisis in Greece and the social and political changes taking place in the country, and all three were released in the public domain.

As described by Chatzistefanou, his first documentary, *Debtocracy*, received a great deal of media attention, which boosted its popularity and drew attention to his future work:

> When we decided to make *Debtocracy*, the mainstream media didn't realize what it would be about. They liked the hype, that a group of young professionals want to make a documentary and distribute it for free on the internet and social media. So we had the support of many mainstream media, and don't forget that I was working also [at] Skai Radio…They promoted it, so we became known as documentarists through the mainstream media…When the mainstream media realized the political background and the ideological background of this documentary, they wanted to pass it down, but it was late, because we had created a huge network in the social media. Then, we could promote our [work] through the social media. (Personal communication, June 26, 2013)

Chatzistefanou explained that *Debtocracy* was further aided by having been released while the "Indignants" movement was still in progress, which publicly aired the documentary:

> It was very helpful when we made *Debtocracy* that it coincided with the Indignados movement. So it was screened to almost every occupied square in Greece. It was perfect timing, a coincidence that helped a lot. But in general, we just uploaded the website and tried to promote it to Twitter and Facebook. (Personal communication, June 26, 2013)

[15] See http://infowarproductions.com/debtocracy_doc/, http://infowarproductions.com/videos/catastroika_doc/, and http://infowarproductions.com/fasismosae/.

In addition, *Debtocracy* was also broadcast by the workers of the occupied ERT3 television channel after state broadcaster ERT was officially shut down by the government:

> We said to all the employees of ERT that of course it's free, they could have done it even without asking…It was funny that for the last two or three years our documentaries were broadcast through major TV stations in Latin America, in Asia, from Japan to Romania and other places, but there was no single nationwide TV station to broadcast it in Greece, so ERT3 was the first medium to try it. So it was again through the internet that people watched. (Personal communication, June 26, 2013)

According to Chatzistefanou, the mainstream media's promotion was no longer needed for his second documentary, *Catastroika*:

> So the second documentary [*Catastroika*], no one said a word about it. We now have more than two million viewers and the mainstream media don't even mention the title of the documentary, but we don't need them anymore. So it's very helpful to have social media networks, but in order to get this, unfortunately you have to, at some point, to make yourself known to the mainstream media. (Personal communication, June 26, 2013)

Chatzistefanou described his plans for a third documentary film project, *Fascism, Inc.* (which was eventually released) and the increasing difficulties of launching crowdfunding campaigns in the midst of a deepening economic crisis and worsening economic climate in Greece:

> We will make a third documentary…[W]e will continue in the same footsteps. It will be about fascism, but not in a traditional way. We want to connect fascism with economic and financial elites and the way that they promote extreme right-wing movements in history, in Italy of the '30s or Germany of the '30s, and to find out if we have the same phenomenon right now in Greece or in other countries. Again it will be crowdfunded, and again it will be promoted mainly by social media, although now we have some access, it's a little better because some new newspapers [have circulated]. For example, I work for *Efimerida ton Syntakton*, so they will help with that. We have *Unfollow* [magazine], that they will also [promote]. We now have some access to more progressive, liberal [publications] and we see if we will survive. More and more [people want to help], we've seen that in the second documentary, but they don't have enough money, so for the first documentary they were giving, let's say, 50 euro, in the second they were giving 5 euro, and we want to see if they will be able to send 1 euro for the third. So we have an increasing base with no money to support us. (Personal communication, June 26, 2013)

During this same time period, other crowdfunding initiatives were also in progress. Costas Efimeros of The Press Project, which produced *Debtocracy*, described his organization's efforts to crowdfund the online webcast of the worker-run occupied ERT after it was shut down on June 11, 2013, and the challenges of crowdfunding in the midst of the economic crisis:

> What I believe should be done on the social media…is an effort to ensure the economic survival of the new media. Right now 400,000 people visit us. If they each contributed 10 cents we would be bigger than [national broadcaster] Mega Channel. We don't want the 10 cents from everyone, we want 1 euro from 10 percent, and once again we will make it. This is not happening though. The ERT webcast has cost us a total of 23,000 euro, out of which we raised 11,000 euros from crowdfunding…The public has not learned, has not gone through the trouble of learning that it is of utmost importance that at some point it takes ownership over news, adopts it (Personal communication, July 18, 2013)

Nevertheless, Apostolia cites *Debtocracy* and *Catastroika* as examples of the public taking ownership over what it would like to see: "We have seen documentaries that were crowdfunded, [about] the Greek crisis…They are two great examples of how people funded to see what they were interested in watching. I expect to see a lot more of that in the coming years" (personal communication, March 6, 2013).

5.2.5.4 – Satire and Parody with a Political Message

One of the most emblematic examples of a video that has "gone viral" in Greece during the years of the crisis, which could be considered a form of alternative media, was produced by actress and activist Katerina Moutsatsou. Less than two minutes in length, Moutsatsou's video, titled "I Am Hellene,"[16] quickly spread through the Greek social media realm and elicited strong reactions both in support and in opposition. Moutsatsou describes her inspiration for producing this video as stemming from an attempt to rediscover national identity in a time of crisis, stating:

> I always use the word "Hellene" because it has a broader meaning…[B]eing Greek is kind of problematic. So seeing that impact and realizing how every Greek, every Hellene

[16] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MFvU18GGM3Y.

> has a different perception of their Hellenic heritage, history, nature, I realized wow, this is a field that needs to be explored and discussed and…I don't pretend that I am, I have completely resolved all my Hellenic questions and issues or history or even nature, but I still think, even discussing it and exploring it gives you a broader perspective. So that was the aim, just trying to find out who am I, because I think that's where all the problems come from. The Greeks have this tremendous weight of their past…but we don't realize the meaning of this. When you're such an old people, it's very hard to know who you are. That big question, what it means to be Hellene, is where it all started for me. (Personal communication, February 9, 2013)

Moutsatsou then discussed the strong reaction the video elicited:

> It's really painful to get all of this range of reactions, because first of all you're not prepared, you were not expecting anything, and there you are, you're becoming a target from nowhere…At the same time, it was great to be enriched by this experience and it was great for myself to open my eyes to something completely new, that is, let us know each other. I got to learn so many Greeks and what they think and how they think, so that was the first thing. The second thing from all those reactions was…I had to explain to myself why are they like this. So that was my own personal path. And thirdly, I had to come to conclusions, and that's where I am right now. And every video I think always has these three stages…What you realize from reactions is that there are very few people who are open to discussion…Most Greeks are… anchored in a specific way of seeing their identity, their Hellenism. (Personal communication, February 9, 2013)

Finally, regarding satire and parody as a means of transmitting political messages, Moutsatsou had the following to say: "It's a more indirect way to get the word out there, to transmit messages. It's a more indirect, smoother way to get to people, so I really like it, and I think I'm going to go on that path" (personal communication, February 9, 2013).

While Moutsatsou's production of parody videos represents one example of using this art form to deliver a political message, Greek Twitter users have utilized satirical hashtags to deliver political messages during the crisis. Examples include the #free_wifi hashtag after then-Prime Minister Antonis Samaras announced plans to provide free wi-fi internet nationwide in 2013; #free_liapis, after then-government minister Mihalis Liapis was arrested for driving without a license and with fake license plates, and numerous satirical postings on Twitter following a

bizarre meeting between Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras and United States President Barack Obama in Athens in 2016 (#free_wifi, 2013; #free_liapis, 2013; “Tha klapsete,” 2016).

5.2.6 – Survey Results: Views on the Public Sphere

Numerous insights regarding perceptions as to how social and new media are utilized by the three sample populations studied (newspaper editors, members of the European Parliament, and representatives of civil society organizations), and how such tools have impacted the Greek public sphere can be ascertained from the results of the electronic survey questionnaire.

The overwhelming majority of those surveyed said that they use social media, including all of the members of the European Parliament who participated. Facebook largely predominated in terms of weekly usage, followed by Twitter and YouTube, and to a lesser extent, tools such as blogs, LinkedIn, and Google+. However, among journalists, Twitter usage was slightly more prevalent than usage of Facebook, whereas elected officials overwhelmingly used Facebook on a regular basis the most, at levels much higher than newspaper editors and civil society representatives. A broad majority of respondents stated that they regularly used social media for writing and commenting on political, economic, or social issues, particularly members of the European Parliament. Facebook was the medium most used for such commentary, especially, once again, amongst members of the European Parliament. Conversely, a plurality of respondents stated that they never used social media to communicate with a mainstream media outlet, while a plurality reported that they had used social media to communicate with a politician, political party, or political candidate. An almost even split was measured between those who answered that they did *not* follow the social media accounts of any politician or political candidate versus those that did. SYRIZA’s Alexis Tsipras was the most followed public

official amongst respondents, trailed by the then-leader of PASOK Evangelos Venizelos, the leader of the Independent Greeks Panos Kammenos, then-Prime Minister Antonis Samaras, and then-government minister Adonis Georgiadis. Almost half of the respondents said that they followed the social media accounts of at least one political party, with SYRIZA and New Democracy representing the most followed parties on social media.

Specifically regarding the contribution of social media and new media to the Greek public sphere, respondents felt that their impact was slightly significant, with results largely even across all three populations surveyed. Social and new media's *impact* upon the public sphere was judged to be slightly negative, with members of the European Parliament and representatives of civil society organizations holding a neutral stance compared to newspaper editors, who held a somewhat negative view. The overall *contribution* of social and new media to the Greek public sphere was also judged to be slightly negative. By contrast, the contribution of mainstream media to the Greek public sphere in the post-junta period was viewed somewhat, with newspaper editors—likely reflecting their own biases—viewing mainstream media's contribution as very positive, members of the European Parliament viewing the contribution of mainstream media as slightly positive, and civil society representatives maintaining a negative view overall. The contribution of mainstream media to the Greek public sphere in the present day was viewed as being slightly significant, with civil society representatives providing the highest measure of significance among the three populations surveyed. The contribution of mainstream media to the public sphere was, however, viewed somewhat negatively overall, with members of the European Parliament holding, in relative terms, the most positive (but still slightly negative) view out of the three populations. The respondents stated that the level of development of public

dialogue and discourse in the post-junta era in Greece was, overall, slightly insignificant, with civil society representatives providing an especially low rating and all three sample populations falling in negative territory. The quality of the development of public dialogue and discourse in Greece was also ranked slightly negatively, with results mostly even across the three samples. Overall, the quality of public dialogue and discourse in Greece were ranked as significantly poorly developed, particularly among newspaper editors surveyed, while the other two samples also returned a very negative outlook.

Finally, Facebook was perceived as the most popular social media tool in Greece, while a plurality of respondents believed that Twitter was the second most popular social medium, followed by a plurality ranking YouTube as the third most popular social media outlet in the country. Facebook was also ranked as the most popular social medium in Greece for the purposes of discussing political issues, followed by Twitter.

5.3 – The Transformation of Civil Society in Greece

5.3.1 – Historical Development of Greek Civil Society

As mentioned in chapter 2, for the purposes of this research project, the public sphere and civil society comprise two discrete, separate, but related categories of study. Civil society in Greece, just as with the public sphere, has long been considered to be underdeveloped or deficient in comparison with the countries of Western Europe and North America. This view is largely reflected in the responses of many of the interviewees who participated in this study, with views ranging from there having been no true civil society historically, to the existence of a partisan- or state-dominated civil society, to the impact of a traditionally individualistic culture.

However, there also existed significant arguments in favor of the existence of a robust civil society in Greece historically, though often unofficial in nature or based around the family unit.

According to Dora Oikonomides, a producer and volunteer with Radiobubble, civil society in Greece has not existed outside of the political party system:

> There was hardly any civil society in Greece in the sense in which people understand that word in North America. Everything that would fall under the category "civil society" in Western Europe or North America, here was affiliated with a political party. NGOs, labor unions are affiliated with political parties…The contribution of civil society to Greek society, of course has just been to perpetuate a corrupt political system essentially. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Skarpelos adopts a similar view, arguing that civil society in Greece was historically tied to the political and clientelist system:

> Civil society in Greece was stunted in its development, and it is due to the withdrawal of citizens from politics that civil society was subdued…even "citizen's committees" that wished to intervene in public affairs were in reality organized by political actors, which used them as a façade for good public relations. For a long time this was the rule. (Personal communication, May 29, 2013)

Others, such as Papathanasiou, described a civil society dominated by the state more broadly:

> No, in Greece there was never a civil society…it was very primitive, even on issues of local governance…even parent-teacher associations at schools were organized by the state…For the past two decades at least, things were very difficult, everything operated on autopilot, people did not care what was happening in their neighborhoods other than, perhaps, sanitation issues. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

As described by Andriotakis, very few initiatives were able to overcome the clientelist system:

> Civil society was defunct and everything went through the political parties…It was so stifling that anything that attempted to develop outside of this context would die…Due to the clientelist system and the primacy of the political parties in the public sphere, civil society was almost entirely absent. There were very few groups which operated at the level of civil society with any success…Usually some political party would come around and stifle it, turn it into its own clientele. (Personal communication, May 27, 2013)

Roumeliotis connects this situation to the prevalence of corruption and a bureaucratic state: "the state is bureaucratic, corrupt, it trips up anything innovative and pioneering. It doesn't allow this, doesn't give opportunities, and the funds that could go to civil society organizations…are squandered or held up or devoured by state actors" (personal communication, April 3, 2014).

Katrougalos drew parallels with the dual public sphere which he argued had developed in Greece in the post-civil war period:

> The mainstream opinion is that we had a very weak civil society with regard to other European countries. I don't fully share this opinion. We had an effort of the state to control civil society, but we had also a faction of the society that resisted. This is the main characteristic of Greek civil society, its duality. There is a big part of it that practically is under the tutelage by the state and in this way underdeveloped, but it had also another kind of civil society with a strong tradition of resistance towards this effort of totalitarianism...It is clear that civil society in Greece is different [than in Europe] in the sense that most organizations that were active in the civil society have been political organizations, other political parties or trade unions…The basic reaction against the state is not by everyday life associations but from political parties or from trade unions. There is a distinction, and of course there is another clear difference: the much more important influence of clientelistic policies and patronage, that in a way, it is in a way of controlling by the state of the civil society. (Personal communication, July 2, 2013)

For Dimitrakopoulou, there has been a much stronger tradition in Greece of participating in demonstrations rather than in social causes:

> There is not a very deeply-rooted culture of participating in movements. We have a very big culture in demonstrating, but we're kind of weak in being organized and especially in directing our reaction towards a specific cause…We don't have a big tradition in NGOs, in active pressure groups. (Personal communication, July 5, 2013)

Apostolopoulos, in turn, describes this phenomenon as traditionally being dominated by leftist actors: "By definition, civil society had been dominated ideologically by the left in Greece. Whoever spoke of civil society, meant it as developing something against the government with a leftist hue. Therefore, conceptually it was abused" (personal communication, May 24, 2013).

Baltzis links the perceived lack of development of Greek civil society with cultural factors, namely prevalent individualism:

> What we call civil society, that is, organizations that are not for profit, that are not state organizations, and at the same time they offer some type of social services, this is relatively new in Greece…I could say that it is not very well developed. I must link this with the culture of people in Greece. All research done on the everyday culture of people in Greece shows that individualism is one of the main values of most people. So from this point of view, the movement of volunteerism has not been very well developed. It started to develop maybe 10 years ago. The Olympic Games was one of the major attempts to develop a mass volunteer movement. (Personal communication, February 23, 2013)

Panagiotis Oikonomou adds that "we had not learned to participate in collective actions" (personal communication, February 13, 2013), while Kristina Tremonti, founder of the "Edosa Fakelaki" initiative, connects this to decades of relative prosperity: "we don't have a notion of active citizenship…There isn't a feeling of solidarity and being connected over the same social issues. The reason was that before the crisis…nobody really had the financial anxieties that the majority of people connect over today" (personal communication, March 5, 2014).

Alex Afouxenidis, senior research fellow at the National Center for Social Research, adopts a different view, highlighting the existence of a robust unofficial civil society sphere:

> I think that in various countries including Greece…you have variations of civil society. You don't just have one model. There isn't one model of civil society…[Y]ou have two categories. The first category has to do with the non-profit sector. Within that category there are various organizations, from NGOs to philanthropic institutions. And the second big category is related to various actions by citizens who come together on a smaller scale. We had many examples of this in Greece recently, with local networks of assistance…various small scale, small to medium scale voluntary activities. These voluntary activities…some may turn into small social movements. But they have a temporal nature. They may work for a few months, for a couple of years, but then they tend to disappear and reappear somewhere else…depending on the case. The first category which has to do with a more formal, institutionalized part of civil society [which] lasts for much longer, because it is based on funding, state funding or other private donations. (Personal communication, December 16, 2016)

Afouxenidis highlights the historical existence of volunteerism connected to civic acts such as fire protection in Greece, and identifies two distinct time periods in the historical development of Greek civil society: one until the mid 1990s, where civil society largely consisted of "small scale voluntarism, small scale activities by various NGOs and other similar organizations and the volunteer work within lobbies and political parties" The second period, according to Afouxenidis, began when Greece became a member of the Development Aid Corporation (DAC) in 1997 and developed "a strategy of dealing with NGOs and other similar organizations, which meant funding" and which "became an essential aspect of government policy." As explained by Afouxenidis, this "brought civil society up to the way we know it in other countries, brought it up to the forefront" (personal communication, December 16, 2016).

Zepou emphasizes the history of local groups working for the common good in Greece, which continues into the present day:

> Even though there is no tradition in volunteerism as there is in Northern Europe and the United States, there is a very deep and old tradition of participation in the common good that one can see especially outside the urban centers…It has not been described in the same way, and the crisis has surfaced this also in the urban centers in the form of "parees," groups of people, family, sometimes extended family, and those are the ones that have taken a lot of initiatives and have been energized to solve small problems in the neighborhoods, small-scale issues, not big things, but to participate in the common good. (Personal communication, January 11, 2014)

Roumeliotis also highlights this history, arguing that civil society was active in Greece dating back to the 19th century with the "Ambelakia" initiative, a co-operative which he describes as the predecessor to the present-day collaborative movement. Roumeliotis adds his view that the media in Greece have rendered such movements invisible:

> The hegemonic mass media…never showed this, never presented it, either because it did not interest them, or because they did not know, or if they did present it, they did so

> selectively and one could not understand that these were alternative proposals for a third way between the state and the private sector. (Personal communication, April 3, 2014)

Fay Koutzoukou, supervisor of the HumanGrid initiative and a volunteer member of TEDx Athens, also argues that civil society initiatives were present in Greece, but that there was no entity to bring these groups into contact with one another or to learn of their existence:

> The problem with Greece was, and still is, that one group does not know what the other is doing. We had very many organizations which could have even been in the same region, doing exactly the same things, and one did not know about the other…The state never developed a registry of such organizations. (Personal communication, February 12, 2014)

Vlachos, in turn, highlighted a lack of cooperation between civil society groups:

> If we have in mind the Anglo-Saxon model of civil society…then in Greece it was limited. If you include the associations, the local communities…you would find dozens or hundreds in every region of Greece…The issue was that each group did not believe that it could achieve its objectives in collaboration with another group. (Personal communication, November 26, 2013)

Finally, some interviewees noted the importance of the family structure in Greek civil society. As stated by Konstantopoulou:

> Greece was always a left-leaning country philosophically…there was always a solidarity among citizens, there was a civil society…to help a fellow man. It may not have been provided by the state but due to the traditions of the Greeks, of family, one person would help another, we could say that from a humanistic point of view Greeks have this trait. (Personal communication, February 15, 2013)

Having examined the historical context in which civil society developed and functioned in Greece, the next two subsections will present two illustrative examples of civil society initiatives which were active in Greece during the period being studied.

5.3.2 – Illustrative Example: Boroume

During the years of the economic crisis in Greece, Boroume ("We Can") developed a reputation as a civil society organization which was largely borne out of Facebook, and which

itself was a product of the crisis. The organization serves as an intermediary between restaurants and other entities which have leftover food which they would like to donate, and organizations which are in need of food donations.

According to Xenia Papastavrou, co-founder of Boroume, her inspiration for founding the organization stemmed from her previous job at a food bank:

> I was a volunteer in a food bank for many years. I could see that the donations of food were dropping and on the other hand the demand for food was rising because many of the institutions were…receiving less funding from the state. Realizing that there was that discrepancy between the amount of food in need and the amount of food being donated, I was trying to find a way of, not solving the problem, but presenting a solution. That's how I came up with Boroume. (Personal communication, April 15, 2013)

Papastavrou stated that Boroume began informally and quickly established an online presence:

> When I started Boroume, the first thing I did was, I found one bakery that wanted to donate fresh bread and one kitchen that needed that amount of bread…[T]here was no organization at that point. It was just an informal connection between two points. On the same level, I thought of the name Boroume, which means "we can" and at that point I registered the domain name…[T]he next thing was to make two or three web pages on the site and just present the idea…It was just me as an individual, as a volunteer, trying to see if this thing could work. I hadn't thought of the next step at that stage. I thought I would make the website, I had just a few pages explaining the idea behind Boroume, and saying that we are creating a network here for people to come and pitch in. So it was not a fully formed idea about how the organization would be created. It was a website that was explaining an idea. (Personal communication, April 15, 2013)

Alexandros Theodoridis, co-founder of Boroume, noted that the idea was initially born in May 2011 but the organization was founded in its current legal form in January 2012 (personal communication, December 18, 2012). Papastavrou describes the organization as one that is "not a food bank" but which "connects donors of food with institutions in need," adding that this structure "maximizes our impact, because we don't have logistics, we don't have high running costs, we can move food…very quickly, and we can be present across Greece without actually having to be physically present" (personal communication, April 15, 2013).

Athinais A., a volunteer with Boroume, described the organization as an example of a "third way" organization, while connecting its activity to the economic crisis:

> This attempt [operates] outside more traditional routes and governmental associations to take matters in their own hands and to do something about it, and I think that is something you see from the current crisis. There is a much greater activity and awareness about both the problems people are facing but also about how people are creating movements and organizations to deal with them. So it's definitely improved. It's gone beyond the sphere of family. I think years ago we used to rely on the state, we used to rely on our family, but now you see that third sector alliance a lot more than you did years ago. (Personal communication, February 11, 2013)

For Boroume, social media played an important role in the organization's development and growth from its earliest days of existence. As explained by Papastavrou:

> I think that it was critical from the beginning. First of all, we were discovered by many journalists from our presence on Facebook and Twitter…I didn't have to advertise our message anywhere, other than social media and our website, so it was crucial in that sense. Also it got many people involved. It helped, it just triggered companies donating food, volunteers as well as institutions, coming into contact with us….It provided a body of people interested in supporting this idea. (Personal communication, April 15, 2013)

Theodoridis further elaborated on the impact of social media for Boroume in its early days:

> From the beginning we realized that social media can be a very powerful tool for what we are doing, because we can communicate the needs of welfare institutions for example, we can communicate what we do and set up a very positive example for others to mimic. We set up a Facebook page from the beginning and a Twitter…and right now, in 11 months, we have almost 8,000 Likes in our Facebook page. [We have reached] 1.4 million people on Facebook and our website [has] several thousand unique visitors per month…[Social media] got us known. Then it helped us communicate to a broader public specific needs. A good example is this school with kids with special needs in Piraeus we assisted, where journalists saw that in Twitter and retweeted it and then someone else saw it and they got to it on the newspapers and then it exploded, I mean there was a wave of donations just from social media. (Personal communication, December 18, 2012)

Theodoridis further noted that Facebook was the organization's most-used social medium, followed by Twitter (personal communication, December 18, 2012), while Papastavrou

mentioned some limited use of Foursquare, adding the following regarding the content Boroume posted on its social media accounts:

> The purpose of the content that we upload is not to promote our organization, but to give people ideas about how they can help, and also to advertise different needs. So if there is an institution for example in need of vegetables or whatever it is on that day, we'll put that on Facebook and then people will start donating food. It's a mechanism to increase the amount of food that's donated and also to help explain what we do, so that other food companies can come into contact with us. (Personal communication, April 15, 2013)

According to Papastavrou, the organization attempted to develop a conversational, informal tone in its social media postings:

> We've adopted a very informal way of talking to people on social media. We're trying to address them directly and say good morning, say good evening…we're trying to actually communicate with people. So we ask them directly to respond to something…instead of feeling like they are facing an organization that is distant. We're trying to break down that distance and say, this is what we are doing together, we are not here to help people, we are here to get you to help people… (Personal communication, April 15, 2013)

Theodoridis adds: "we never [post] political comments or similar comments that...we never comment a certain thing that is happening in society or the political sphere. We never do that. We are a-political" (personal communication, December 18, 2012).

Another initiative of Boroume which utilized new media tools was the organization's "Map of Need." Volunteer Vicky Foteinou describes this as "a map in which all the institutions which are in need, which have a lack of food, are presented, connected through Google Maps…you can find the exact address and further information about the institutions," noting that while the map is not interactive, members of the public can submit locations to be added (personal communication, December 14, 2012). Papastavrou describes the map as:

> …something that's an integral part of our website…we want the people to know where a need exists. We don't want to feel that people have to come into contact with us in order to help. The philosophy behind Boroume is that everybody can help in their neighborhood, so we want them to know about the different points [in] their

> neighborhood…I think the map is a way to help the people to realize the problem and also to get actively involved. (Personal communication, April 15, 2013)

Theodoridis describes other types of interventions in civil society that have resulted out of the social media presence of Boroume and interactivity with the public:

> We answer all the comments on Facebook and all the messages that we have, because we feel that this is our responsibility. We have from a couple in a day to up to 30-40 in a day. This is also good for us because we get some insight, we see what inspires people, what triggers the interest of people, specific subjects. We also use their suggestions in order to contact other possible donors, for example what we have done is that we have taken several e-mails and posts in Facebook about the food waste in military camps…we went actually to the chief of staff of the Greek military and we showed him that people are talking about this and this is an issue in social media… He was very fond of the idea to get started with that. (Personal communication, December 18, 2012)

Some of the organization's volunteers also learned of Boroume via its social media presence and were inspired to get involved. Foteinou described her experience:

> I had heard about Boroume…I [visited] the Facebook page of Boroume and from that time I [contacted] them and now I am a volunteer for over a year. I liked all the activities of Boroume and all the articles they had on their Facebook page, and this was something that caught my attention from the first time. The main reason why I found Boroume was through Facebook. (Personal communication, December 14, 2012)

Theodoridis estimated that out of 20-25 volunteers, 5 or 6 had discovered Boroume through its social media presence (personal communication, December 18, 2012).

Looking at the overall impact of Boroume on civil society and Greek society as a whole, Papastavrou stated:

> I think that we've helped in many different ways. First of all, we've helped raising awareness about the problem of hunger. We've helped the institutions become more extroverted as they [have started] voicing their needs instead of having problems and not knowing how to present them. We are getting more people actively involved and wanting to help, because actually we are presenting them a way to help…I think that some people are in need of some encouragement, of some positive [reinforcement]…it might sound very simplistic but I think it's true because we get people saying to us "we look forward to your post on Facebook, because we need somebody to tell us that something good is happening around us, that some people around us are interested in helping people." I

> think it's reinforcing a sentiment of…things will be alright, because so many good things are happening around us. (Personal communication, April 15, 2013)

Athinais A. noted the contribution of Boroume in helping to overcome societal taboos in discussing poverty or hardship, and in raising awareness of such issues in Greek society:

> I think that we discuss issues that used to be taboo or uncomfortable…even the fact that so many people who used to be able to afford food and to feed their families and now are going to shelters and food banks…I think it's definitely brought things to the surface that makes a lot of people uncomfortable but they are necessary to be known…It has been really big…in terms of the sensitivisation for the needs of so many people in Greece that have some basic need like food. In that sense it has really contributed, and also to highlight how much food waste went on in previous years and there was nothing people did about it…I think it's really grown the awareness and highlighted the importance of the specific problem. (Personal communication, February 11, 2013)

Theodoridis mentioned using his professional contacts in the political realm and the visibility of Boroume to lobby for legislative changes:

> In my profession I am very close to politicians every day, and we are trying right now to change a specific, a certain paragraph in a law, that until now [acts as] an obstacle to people, to a restaurant, to a bakery, to donate the food, instead of destroying it. Now for them it's better to destroy the food…than to donate it….We want to change it and I am speaking with certain politicians in the three parties that are in the government and when the paragraph will be ready from our office…I will give it to them and they will bring it, pass it by law. (Personal communication, December 18, 2012)

While the above interviews were conducted in the 2012-2013 time period, a follow-up interview conducted with Theodoridis in 2017 provided some insights into how the organization and its use of social and new media tools evolved in the interim:

> [Boroume] has changed enormously in terms of our efficiency to save and donate food. When we spoke we were talking about a few thousand meals per day. In 2013 we saved something close to 700,000 portions of food. In 2014 we saved 1.4 million. In 2015 we saved 3.7 million. And in 2016 we saved over 6 million in one year…Since then, we have created several programs that approach the whole problem of food waste, a food saving program for farmer's markets…we [have gone] to more than 100 schools and we talked to thousands of kids…We grow our own field outside of Athens for educational reasons and…in order to enable people to volunteer more… We have more employees. I would

> say it's a different organization in terms of impact. In terms of DNA, in terms of how the people function here, it's the same. (Personal communication, January 27, 2017)

Theodoridis also highlighted changes in the way Boroume utilizes social media:

> We thought it was really important to post every day on a permanent basis. Now we don't think that it's so important any more. We think it's better to post fewer but better posts…and we have learnt that it's really difficult to make out what post brings the most views and likes…We don't think Twitter is relevant at all in Greece anymore. It never was that important, but I don't think we are posting anymore because it's not relevant at all…Instagram is more powerful now in Greece, I would say in the past one or two years, so we started posting on Instagram…We have our YouTube channel. We don't have that many videos to post, because in order to make a video, even in an amateur way…it takes time to edit it, to look at it, and this is time we unfortunately do not have…it's not something that is high in our priorities. We are still keen on posting on Facebook…I would say 3 or 4 times a week. (Personal communication, January 27, 2017)

Finally, despite reducing the organization's overall emphasis on Facebook, Theodoridis noted its continued importance in recruiting volunteers:

> Facebook is not important any more to us in terms of general projection of what we are doing. In terms of getting volunteers interested in that, it's really good. Yesterday, we posted on Facebook for volunteers for the farmers' market on Saturday and we already have three people volunteering through that post…It's now the most important source of volunteers. (Personal communication, January 27, 2017)

5.3.3 – Illustrative Example: Radiobubble and Civil Society

Radiobubble is an online radio station which gained tremendous prominence during the years of the economic crisis in Greece, for its alternative news programming and its very visible profile and activity on social media and particularly Twitter. These aspects of Radiobubble's operations will be analyzed in chapter 7. However, Radiobubble's activity expanded beyond the confines of social and new media into the realm of civil society. These initiatives included Hackademy, Tutorpool, and a radio program produced by Doctors Without Borders.

5.3.3.1 – Hackademy

Oikonomides describes Hackademy as an educational program for professional and amateur journalists, focusing on the usage of new media:

> Hackademy, is a very useful service to civil society, because it was launched as an educational program for journalists or for people who would like to be journalists or for people who de facto are journalists, even though they were never trained in it. It focuses on the use of new media. So you will have training on how to write and manage a blog, how to use Twitter as a news tool, how to use Facebook, how to create a web radio. It's a total of 96 hours on Saturdays. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Papathanasiou describes Hackademy as "a civil society initiative but not a solidarity initiative," noting that it works with paid instructors from all over the world. He characterizes Hackademy as an "innovative lab for new media," adding that the course offerings are split into two groups: journalism and web radio (personal communication, December 17, 2012).

Zaira Konstantopoulou, a volunteer with Hackademy, described this initiative as being borne out of Radiobubble and out of the need for people to discuss topics that they are passionate about, without a profit motive. Acting "as a branch of Radiobubble," Konstantopoulou noted that Hackademy was self-organized, and was promoted through Radiobubble, adding her view though that it was "not marketed properly." Despite characterizing Hackademy as "innovative" for Greece and "probably the first [initiative] of its kind," Konstantopoulou also expressed reservations about its potential, stating that "she cannot predict the future of Hackademy" in the unstable broader context of crisis-hit Greece (personal communication, February 15, 2013).

5.3.3.2 – Tutorpool

Tutorpool was described by Papathanasiou as "one of the first, if not the first, online solidarity movements in the field of education," organized in late 2011-early 2012 (personal

communication, December 17, 2012). Tutorpool brought together teachers who volunteered tutoring services at no cost to families who could not afford private tutoring for their children.

As explained by Christina Lardikou, a volunteer with Tutorpool, Tutorpool was not directly borne out of Radiobubble as Hackademy was. Instead, it was a product of the "Indignants" movement in Athens in 2011:

> We met in Syntagma Square and the idea came through a tweet in last November from [Twitter user] @doltsevito…she had the idea, "what about doing something for education?" and then @SatanikoKoutavi replied, "okay, let's do something." They had this idea and they gathered in the beginning 10 people…the idea was creating a community, actually creating an internet site [to make connections with] teachers and professors for offering free private lessons, because there were huge problems in education…in order to enter a Greek University you have to have private lessons, and more and more people didn't have this ability and lots of families couldn't afford paying private lessons for their children. (Personal communication, February 20, 2013)

However, it was Radiobubble's café in central Athens which served as the meeting point for those interested in this new initiative, while Twitter served as a networking tool. Lardikou states:

> It all started from Syntagma Square. I cannot remember how exactly happened, but we sort of started gathering up here [at the Radiobubble café]…because apparently the whole Twitter community started to know each other and they all came here, so we started coming here. And I met in Syntagma also lots of people from Twitter and we became friends and we started being locals here. (Personal communication, February 20, 2013)

According to Lardikou, "we [have] something like 600 or 700 professors teaching, and around 500 families. That may mean that maybe...two children, two students…people are asking for it because they cannot afford such an expensive thing [as] private lessons," adding that several of the instructors involved with Tutorpool learned about the initiative on Twitter (personal communication, February 20, 2013).

The platform around which the Tutorpool service was centered was Google Maps. As described by Lardikou, the map displayed the locations of available tutors as well as students

who were in need, and incorporated the services of other similar groups around Greece with which Tutorpool had developed close relationships and who also wished to offer their services as part of the Tutorpool platform (personal communication, February 20, 2013).

While social media was important for Tutorpool's activities, Lardikou noted that the group had to turn to mainstream media as well, to promote the initiative:

> …we use social media to spread the news…we have a bigger response from social media from professors than from students, because most parents don't have Twitter accounts. We had articles in newspapers or some in magazines and newspapers, we have also [appeared on a televised talk show hosted by] Eleni Menegaki. There was a big debate about it, but it had a big response, because fathers and mothers were [watching], and that's the target" (Personal communication, February 20, 2013)

Lardikou added that Tutorpool's involvement with the media also expanded to a monthly show on Radiobubble, focusing on educational issues (personal communication, February 20, 2013).

Regarding the societal role of Tutorpool and its impact on civil society, Lardikou stressed that Tutorpool was not a non-governmental organization or a replacement for the Greek state:

> From my experiences from Tutorpool, the need of doing something in a different way, was very big…It's mostly about solidarity than for doing that for free…It is building new communities and people who are actually going to be involved and give back what they've earned. What we ask from students and what we want to create is that somebody offered that for you and helped you, you should offer it next or try to get involved as much as you can…We are not trying to replace the state…that's why we are not becoming at the moment an NGO or something like that, free education is something that the state should do and it's not our job to do it, but in this time of need, there are people who are actually losing the right to free education, and we are trying to do this to help them. (Personal communication, February 20, 2013)

Oikonomides adds:

> Tutorpool is by any possible definition a civil society organization. The only thing about Tutorpool that is not an organization, it is a group of people, there is no structure, there are no paid people, they are all volunteers, they have no a clear job description...it functions as a network, not as an organization. So I think that this is an interesting new development for this country, because the traditional civil society's structures have failed so badly, people are going for something entirely different now, which is actually

> bypassing the traditional structures, not only the state, but all the traditional structures that you would expect to fulfill that role. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Finally, Apostolia described Tutorpool as "… the perfect example of self-organization and trying to help others that need assistance" (personal communication, March 6, 2013).

5.3.3.3 – Doctors Without Borders and Radiobubble

A third venue through which Radiobubble opened its doors to civil society was through the development of a radio program with the Greek branch of Doctors Without Borders. Noting that communications and social media were the second most important aspect of Doctors Without Borders' operations after its medical work, Sophia Apostolia, the web editor for the Greek branch of the organization, explained that she discovered Radiobubble from Twitter and particularly from its active #rbnews hashtag (to be presented in detail in chapter 7). As stated by Apostolia, she attended a Hackademy seminar on how to use #rbnews and "was very impressed by the fact that #rbnews was a tool that had a proper scientific background behind it and guidelines," in contrast to the credibility crisis of mainstream news. With World AIDS Day approaching a few days after the seminar, arrangements were made to schedule a one hour radio program focusing on AIDS and a new musical CD released by Doctors Without Borders with an AIDS theme. This initial contact opened the door for Doctors Without Borders to attain a timeslot on Radiobubble's schedule (personal communication, March 6, 2013).

According to Apostolia, the radio program was scheduled for one hour monthly and hosted by two individuals including herself, focusing on major health concerns in Greece and airing interviews with Doctors Without Borders volunteers. Social media was the main vehicle for promoting the program, as Apostolia noted: "[s]ocial media is actually the main channel of

advertising the program, and we do invite people to ask their questions or to just say their comments" (personal communication, March 6, 2013).

In summarizing the relationship of Doctors Without Borders with Radiobubble, Apostolia said the station represents "a community that is very close to our mentality," and an example of "citizen journalism, safeguarded with guidelines" (personal communication, March 6, 2013). In turn, Panagiotis Oikonomou described Radiobubble as a "microcosm" of civil society, one which uses social media to create a "social radio" (personal communication, February 13, 2013).

5.3.4 – Other New Civil Society Initiatives during the Crisis

In addition to the two illustrative examples presented above, several other civil society initiatives which developed in Greece during the period being studied (2011-2017) and which maintained a significant social media presence, will be detailed in the following subsections.

5.3.4.1 – Atenistas

The "Atenistas"[17] are a citizens' group in Athens concerned with organizing actions with the goal of improving the urban landscape and quality of life in the city. Examples of actions undertaken by the "Atenistas" include painting school buildings, converting abandoned lots into small parks and green spaces, and organizing "open walks" of the urban area. Founded in 2010, the group has maintained an active social media presence. Nantia Papadimitriou, a volunteer with the "Atenistas," described the group's philosophy:

> Atenistas is an open group of people living in Athens, of Athenians let's say. Our name, we translate it as "Athenians in action." It's not an NGO, it's not [related to] the political parties, the state, or the municipality. It's just an open group of people…that really believe that there are so many things [to do] in the city, that they have to live it and feel it and enjoy living here. Of course there are a lot of things that we don't like, so we want to change them and ameliorate our everyday life and [that] of our neighbors and our friends

[17] See https://www.atenistas.org.

> and in the neighborhood that we don't really live but other people live and they really are in need of a better civil environment. (Personal communication, October 4, 2013)

Andriotakis described the group's beginnings, which occurred via the early Greek blogosphere:

> The Atenistas were launched by two people—I had the luck of attending their early meetings—Dimitris Dimopoulos and "Stathis"…who met each other via "Stathis'" blog…*Athensville*, which was about Athens. [Inspired by the blog] they decided to launch Atenistas, which has faced sharp criticism from the left, because the left generally never liked anything having to do with civil society, they haven't embraced it. Anything that is not revolutionary, they reject. (Personal communication, May 27, 2013)

While the "Atenistas" were not a creation of the crisis, Papadimitriou notes that the economic crisis made the need for such an initiative more acute:

> Atenistas was meant for the people…[The founders] wanted to do it back in 2010. The crisis was not so obvious in Greece….I think that the crisis, it made what the Atenistas do more obvious, but it's not the reason why it was created. The two guys wanted to do something for the city. They wanted Athenians to spend more time in the public space. This was a need…for all times and periods. (Personal communication, October 4, 2013)

Papadimitriou considers the "Atenistas" a civil society organization, and further notes that the "Atenistas" exist unofficially, and do not accept money:

> The Atenistas are much different from everybody else, because we don't have a legal personality. We are not a legal entity. We are not an NGO. We don't have money at all, so even the things we do…we accept some donations but only materials, we never accept money, we don't have money. This has helped us to create this transparency and this trust with the people and the Athenians. (Personal communication, October 4, 2013)

Papadimitriou also stressed that "[t]he people that are participating in the Atenistas don't consider themselves volunteers. We consider ourselves a group of people that we just believe in the same things…" (personal communication, October 4, 2013).

Regarding social media usage, Papadimitriou noted the group's robust Facebook account, with over 70,000 likes, and a Twitter account used only for posting announcements, which had approximately 19,000 followers. Papadimitriou added that each "Atenistas" subgroup maintained

its own secret Facebook group, and that "in our organization…our main way of working is Facebook" (personal communication, October 4, 2013).

Finally, Papadimitriou observed the influence of the "Atenistas" on other similar groups which developed in Greece during the crisis:

> Atenistas was the first this kind of group that appeared in Athens. A lot of people have been inspired by Atenistas, not only in Athens but also in other cities around Greece. More than 17 organizations have a similar name, like -istas in the end and have been created after us. We don't have a direct contact with them or something to do with them. They just got the inspiration. (Personal communication, October 4, 2013)

5.3.4.2 – Edosa Fakelaki

"Edosa Fakelaki"[18] translates as ("I Gave an Envelope") and refers to a longstanding practice of offering a bribe to personnel at public hospitals or at other public services, in order to receive better service—or sometimes, any service at all. It was such an experience with her family that inspired Kristina Tremonti to launch this initiative in October 2012. In her words:

> That [experience] was very shocking to me. I returned to Yale that fall semester…and I wanted to write about corruption for my senior thesis, and I realized that I had zero data on corruption in Greece. Yes, there were some Transparency International statistics that said that six of ten Greeks paid a bribe in their lifetime. And then I realized that that didn't suffice. I didn't know what the average price was for a bribe, how many people resisted paying a bribe, what was the price for a C-section versus a natural birth, things like that which are very important, which we all knew happened around us. How did we not know the exact numbers and patterns and where the most corrupt services were across the country? I was determined to go out and find the data for myself, and I set up Edosa Fakelaki, which is a crowdsourced website separated across four categories. Edosa Fakelaki is the first EU initiative that has ever managed to harness the collective energy of citizens to fight corruption. (Personal communication, March 5, 2014)

The website's four categories are "I Paid a Bribe," "I Didn't Pay a Bribe," "I Accepted a Bribe," and "I Reported a Bribe." In each category, users could submit their experiences with bribery, including naming public services and civil servants who requested a bribe and their decision

[18] See http://www.edosafakelaki.org.

whether to pay or not to pay, explaining the reasons why a bribe may have been demanded—such as low wages—and success stories with reporting bribery. Tremonti noted that "only anonymous reports are made on the website" (personal communication, March 5, 2014).

Tremonti also described how "Edosa Fakelaki" went "viral" soon after its launch:

> This project had zero marketing budget…everything was social media-driven. Social media was the key into achieving what we've achieved so far in just a year. No professionals were hired, it's just the website on its own…We launched in October one evening, and within 24 hours through social media we had gathered approximately 300 likes. And through those likes we got a radio interview on *zougla.gr*…It was a catalyzing effect. After *Zougla* it was Mega Channel, after Mega it was Alpha TV…then we had BBC, we had France 24, we had *Der Spiegel*. (Personal communication, March 5, 2014)

Noting that "Edosa Fakelaki" is active on Facebook and Twitter, with a limited presence on YouTube, Tremonti described the initiative's social media accounts as serving the purpose of:

> …letting our followers know what we are doing, but also I've turned our Facebook page into a news outlet for corruption-only material. Any major decision, legislation that has to do with corruption gets published immediately on the Facebook page. Any news that has to do with [corruption]…gets posted. (Personal communication, March 5, 2014).

Tremonti noted several "success stories" of reporting instances of corruption via the "Edosa Fakelaki" website, including a university professor who was under investigation for demanding a bribe to pass a student in his class, and a public official responsible for government contracts who was fired. Despite this, Tremonti stated that the government and state had not responded to the extent that she had hoped: "I'm very sad to say it's one of the most bitter aspects of this journey, it's not they have not embraced this effort as much as I'd wished they had." Tremonti noted that "Edosa Fakelaki" was operating in risky territory, as Greece did not have any laws protecting whistleblowers, putting the site at risk of facing charges of libel and defamation. As noted by Tremonti, via her platform, "[c]itizens for the first time are given a collective voice that is public information, something that was entirely in [state] control before.

So yes, there are some bumps along the road. I feel they are warming up slowly to the idea, given the public's response, the media's response," adding that "Edosa Fakelaki" had just been featured on "Public Television" (ERT's interim replacement) (personal communication, March 5, 2014).

Finally, Tremonti described her future hopes for "Edosa Fakelaki," stating:

> My future vision would be to see Edosa Fakelaki as a non-profit organization, a powerful tool for the citizens to report, in real-time, bribery going forward. Now the majority of our stories are in retrospect. If we could go forward using this in real-time, that would be amazing, but also engaging citizens across the nation, from remote villages to different provinces through social media, and building an awareness campaign, making it cool to say no. Saying no to bribery, standing up for each other, learning from each other, and I think social media will be key for that. (Personal communication, March 5, 2014)

5.3.4.3 – Enallaktikos.gr

Enallaktikos.gr (meaning "alternative") is a portal dedicated to the "third sector" in Greece, featuring news about civil society organizations, grassroots groups, volunteerism, as well as a listing of all such organizations active throughout the country. In the words of founder Andreas Roumeliotis, a former journalist for the *Eleftherotypia* newspaper:

> We developed a Google Map where you can enter and see in each region which are the groups which are active, and from there visit their website, Facebook, and Twitter…The news we post includes topics such as local crop varieties and biodiversity, water, energy, the collaborative economy, personal liberties and social rights, migrant rights, animal rights… (Personal communication, April 3, 2014)

According to Roumeliotis, *enallaktikos.gr* was the result of five years of research and visits to over 50 cities throughout Greece. *Enallaktikos.gr* "recorded and presents online over 3,000 organizations, initiatives, and groups, many of which are unofficial, without a legal status, what we call social and collaborative economy" (personal communication, April 3, 2014).

Roumeliotis states that his inspiration for launching *enallaktikos.*gr was the lack of media coverage of what he described as "the largest solidarity movement seen in Europe." The website

was developed as a result, with a heavy emphasis on social media. Roumeliotis further noted that future plans for *enallaktikos.gr* included the launch of alternative web radio and television outlets, and the establishment of a grocery store featuring responsibly sourced local products (personal communication, April 3, 2014).

5.3.4.4 – HumanGrid

Founded in late 2012, HumanGrid[19] is a project which concerns the mapping and networking of civil society organizations and NGOs throughout Greece. Similarly to the example of enallaktikos.gr, HumanGrid is a platform based on Google Maps, while incorporating a blog as well. As detailed by Koutzoukou: "[HumanGrid] uses as its basic tool a website based on Google Maps, with pins and notes wherever there are volunteer organizations and citizens' groups…We also have a blog where we post content and interviews with individuals who are active in the civil society sector…" (personal communication, February 12, 2014).

In addition, an active Facebook and Twitter presence was maintained by HumanGrid, used in part to help link civil society groups with one another:

> We want to communicate the content of different organizations…so they can speak with their own voice about what they are doing. On social media we act as a platform to communicate the actions of other groups. We are more active on Facebook, but we try to be active on Twitter, especially live tweeting from events that may interest our audience. (Personal communication, February 12, 2014).

Regarding these organizations, Koutzoukou noted that 140 such groups were listed on HumanGrid at that time, and that the site had recently expanded beyond Athens and had begun including initiatives from the rest of the country. However, aside from listing these organizations and publicizing their activities, HumanGrid also became a conduit for individuals seeking opportunities to volunteer. As stated by Koutzoukou: "[q]uite often we receive an e-mail or a

[19] See http://www.HumanGrid.gr, http://blog.HumanGrid.gr.

message on Facebook seeking volunteer opportunities," citing at least one example of a volunteer finding a service opportunity via HumanGrid. Furthermore, Koutzoukou noted several instances where inter-group linkages were achieved, from organizations that discovered one another via HumanGrid (personal communication, February 12, 2014).

5.3.4.5 – Illegal Signs

Though this is an initiative which was only active for part of the period being studied (until 2013), having launched prior to the economic crisis, it is being included both for its long-lasting impact and also due to the fact that it was not continued by successive governments. "Illegal Signs" refers to a website and social media platform[20] which allowed citizens to report illegally constructed billboards in urban areas throughout Greece. This initiative was an extension of the e-government initiatives of the Giorgos Papandreou-led PASOK government.

> Manos Andriotakis, a journalist at the time, describes the idea behind this initiative:
>
> As a journalist…I was investigating illegal billboards. Our investigation led us to families of individuals whose children were killed as a result of these billboards. From that day I became involved in the issue. I began to track these individuals' efforts to attain justice, produced a documentary, blogged, posted on Facebook and especially on Twitter, this was in 2009 and 2010, when my documentary was screened at the Thessaloniki Film Festival…I was an investigator but also a type of activist…Giorgos Papandreou was Prime Minister and took notice, and [the government] constructed an application and website…where anyone could submit a complaint and a photo. This worked very well, thousands of signs came down. (Personal communication, May 27, 2013)

Papachatzis describes the "Illegal Signs" initiative as "a means of pressure on the part of citizens," which earned the attention of the Prime Minister, who assigned two or three staffers to the project. As stated by Papachatzis, over 2,500 billboards were removed just in Athens and remains evident today. Papachatzis further noted the symbolism of the marketing campaign for

[20] See https://web.archive.org/web/20130630051910/http://www.illegalsigns.gov.gr, https://www.facebook.com/illegalsignsgr, https://www.twitter.com/illegalsignsgr.

the "Illegal Signs" initiative, utilizing *legal* billboards in locations such as Athens Metro stations (personal communication, October 12, 2013).

Similar to the fates of other e-government initiatives inaugurated at around the same time, Andriotakis noted that, as of 2013, the website was no longer functioning, as the new post-Papandreou government did not continue the initiative (personal communication, May 27, 2013).

5.3.4.6 – Metropolitan Community Clinic of Ellinikon

The Metropolitan Community Clinic of Ellinikon[21] is based in the Athens suburb of Ellinikon, and is located in a facility that is part of the city's former international airport, which has been decommissioned. The clinic became widely known throughout Greece for providing free medical services and prescription medication to poor citizens who were in need and who were uninsured or could not afford medical treatment.

Christos Sideris is a founding member of the clinic and head of its communications team, the clinic was initially the idea of a cardiologist by the name of Dr. Giorgos Vichas, while Sideris was part of a group of six doctors who participated in the protests of the "Indignants" in Athens in 2011. It was the first such clinic in the Athens area and the largest in Greece. Sideris states:

> Dr. Vichas, from an early stage, realized that many people were coming to him at the clinic where he's working, [within] the public health system, and many of his patients had lost their insurance coverage, and as a result they couldn't go to a doctor or get any medication. He told us the idea of creating a community clinic where people would come free…and receive medications and everything for free, and we decided to go ahead because we saw this clinic as a way to resist…this economic warfare that's been waged on the Greek society. By September 2011 the idea had matured in our heads and we came in contact with the local municipality in Elliniko-Argyroupoli, and the mayor was very positive, so they decided to give us this building where we are here today. Within two and a half months we made numerous calls on the internet asking for help from people, to give us excess medication that they had at home, and many doctors came forward, so the initial group of six people became sixty, within two and a half months. So by December 2011 we were ready to start. (Personal communication, November 26, 2013)

[21] See http://www.mkiellinikou.org/en/.

Sideris described the key role social media played in the development of the clinic:

> The social media have played a very important role, the most important role perhaps, in the way that this clinic has grown. From the first instance we created a blog and we posted our pleas and then we reposted on our Facebook. Through Facebook many people shared our initial plea and we saw an ever-increasing number of people sending us e-mails requesting more information, how they can help, they would come to our meetings, the initial meetings before the clinic started, and we discussed everything with [them]. Everything happened through Facebook. (Personal communication, November 26, 2013)

Sideris noted that social media also played an important role in attracting volunteers to the clinic, noting that there were 230 individuals working as volunteers: "[t]hey found us through Facebook and our blog, they would send us their contact details and we would…ask them to come to the clinic…if we saw that they could help us, we would go ahead and recruit them" (personal communication, November 26, 2013).

Regarding the clinic's usage of social media, Sideris noted that there were now two blogs in operation, one in Greek and one in English. A Twitter account was created as well as a secondary Facebook group, in addition to the clinic's official page. Content posted on social media included calls for help, such as requests for donations of medication, in addition to press releases and notices, information for patients—including details regarding how they could navigate the public health system—and details about the doctors and services available at the clinic. New media tools were also used for the clinic's internal operations according to Sideris, including Google Groups and Google Drive. Sideris added that patients used the clinic's social and new media presence to contact the clinic for medication or assistance, often even from outside of Athens. However, as stated by Sideris, perhaps the most important role of the clinic's social media presence was to protect its very existence:

> [Social media] is the biggest protection that we have, because we are not "legal." We do not have any legal papers, covering this clinic. Everything is self-organized…So the way that we protect ourselves is through publicity, and we gain this publicity through our social media, the social media and also through our blog, the press releases and we get a lot of feedback from people. Journalists from abroad read our press releases and they visit us here, all through the media... (Personal communication, November 26, 2013)

Such protection became necessary for the clinic on at least one occasion, as described by Sideris:

> When we were raided by the anti-drug police, instantly we went on Facebook, we told everybody that we were being raided, we will let you know in a few minutes when we have more information why they're raiding us. It was incredible the way people supported us. The feedback we got back was amazing. We had people, without even asking them, coming down here and saying to us "what do you want us to do, just tell us what you want us to do." It was amazing, we got so many messages. It's like you're investing something and you get back ten times more. So yes, social media play a very important role for us, it's our voice. (Personal communication, November 26, 2013)

Sideris notes that this know-how in terms of using social media has been used to help other similar initiatives throughout Greece: "…they came to us first and we explained to them how important it is to go on Facebook and Twitter and other social media to spread the word. Some of them are doing this and it's very nice to see" (personal communication, November 26, 2013).

Conversely, according to Sideris, the mainstream media had been hostile to this initiative. As described by Sideris:

> [The mainstream media] are terrible. They were ignoring us totally. At the moment they're trying to manipulate us, they're trying to invite us to certain TV shows, but they do not let us voice our concerns, they do not allow us to have a discussion with the Minister of Health, for example. They just put us in the background and perhaps…in the last few minutes they will let us ask one question…We do not like to be manipulated in such a way, so recently we walked out of a TV show and we publicized this, because the people that come to us have very important problems and we are their voice. We cannot become accomplices to this crime, and by playing the game of the Greek media, we're helping the politicians, and this is not our goal. (Personal communication, November 26, 2013)

5.3.4.7 – The Omikron Project

The Omikron Project[22] is an online initiative which sought, primarily through a series of animated videos and sketches, to dispel commonly-heard stereotypes about Greece and the Greek people. As described by Mehran Khalili, the initiative's founder, the Omikron Project was established in March 2012, and is a volunteer group "dedicated to fighting what we call 'Greece's image crisis' through creative productions and other events and projects" (personal communication, June 4, 2013). Khalili explained his inspiration for this project, which was named after the public space—the Omikron Bar in central Athens—where the group would meet:

> Me and some friends were sitting around looking at the headlines and saying that international media headlines are disconnected from the reality of what's happening in Greece. They are quite unrepresentative of what's happening and they are reinforcing very negative stereotypes about Greek people, that Greeks are lazy, violent, corrupt. We wanted to do something about it, we wanted to respond to this, because there was zero crisis management from the state and we believed that the image crisis that was reinforcing of these headlines and stereotypes creates is enormously damaging to Greek people psychologically and economically and has a cost today. So, that's how the idea came about. (Personal communication, June 4, 2013)

Khalili stated that the group, which consisted of seven main members and about 40 individuals who attend its meetings, mainly produced and uploaded videos (such as their "Alex" series of animated videos) and noting that the group has no budget for anything other than social media, used as its primary media tools social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Tumblr, though out of these, Facebook was used the most.

Referring to the coverage of the Greek economic crisis in the mainstream media and the Omikron Project's efforts, Khalili stated that:

> Media sensationalism is a problem across the board…Every time we upload something, I get this kind of thing in the comments, somehow I talk about putting a positive spin and ignoring all of Greece's sins or the corruption…Reform has to happen. But in parallel

[22] See http://www.omikronproject.gr.

> with that, you need crisis management, you need to manage the image, because it has devastating economic and psychological effects on Greek people in Greece and across the world. (Personal communication, June 4, 2013)

Finally, one additional significant part of the Omikron Project's crisis management efforts, aside from the videos and images produced, was a map of grassroots initiatives in Greece[23], in an attempt to dismiss the stereotype that Greeks were sitting idle during the crisis.

5.3.4.8 – Save Greek Water

During the years of the economic crisis and austerity in Greece, the privatization of publicly-owned assets is an issue which has often been at the forefront. Successive governments have moved forward with a regime of privatizing important public assets, ranging from airports and harbors to the national lottery, while other assets have long been threatened with privatization, such as the public electric and water utilities. Maria Kanellopoulou, founder of the "Save Greek Water" initiative[24], explains how her experience participating in the "Indignants" movement in 2011 helped her launch this effort:

> Having the experience of the squares and…we started with a very small group of people the formation of this citizens' initiative…for the non-privatization of water in Greece. As we started it, we thought "how can we have the maximum results by pushing our message in Greek society, what have we learned up until now?" The idea was to be adaptive and, in a way, technocratic as well…It was a political experiment of a completely different kind from what the square was about…it was a mainstream façade of something really radical. The idea was to keep our position the way it is, which is in a way radical, and on the other hand, have the whole communication strategy built on the idea that most of the people need to be persuaded about this. (Personal communication, October 3, 2013)

For Kanellopoulou, social media and blogging were two important pillars of this strategy:

> Of course the social media and the blog were very important from this point of view. Our blog is fully bilingual…it was a strategic choice to be able to communicate with the rest of the world what was the situation in Greece and taking into consideration the fact that actually the privatization of water was imposed by the lenders….And this is how we

[23] See http://www.omikronproject.gr/grassroots.
[24] See http://www.savegreekwater.org.

> [built] our credibility…for example [if there is] any public dialogue about the issue, we are definitely going to be there. We have used Facebook very much, we have our Facebook page, we also have a closed group in Facebook where we coordinate our everyday works. [We organize] assemblies are once a month, not more than that, and the rest of the time we work through the internet…The Facebook page by now has something like almost 4,000-5,000 followers…I think we have been successful enough to actually put the water privatization into the public dialogue. Before that, there were not any comments, not even on mainstream television, not anywhere, about what was going to happen with water. (Personal communication, October 3, 2013)

As an example of both a successful intervention and a collaboration with another activist group, Kanellopoulou describes an appearance on the occupied worker-run ERT soon after it was officially shut down by the Greek government in June 2013:

> We have the example of when we went on ERT in the first days after its closure, and we revealed the fact that there were hidden debts of the public sector towards EYDAP [the water utility of Athens], and this created a lot of problems for the government. They spent all summer and basically September too, to try to regulate these debts in order to continue with the privatization. So in a way, this was not [an] immediate response, but it was a response to our actions that we initiated. We revealed this situation, they tried to compensate for it and to carry on with the privatization, so at least we gained some time through this. (Personal communication, October 3, 2013)

"Save Greek Water" is not the only such initiative in Greece. Roumeliotis referenced the efforts of social responsibility corporations such as the "136 Movement" in Thessaloniki, a citizens' movement which has proposed buying the local water utility from the state in order to prevent its privatization and to collectively manage it. The movement even gained the support of Bill Gates (personal communication, April 3, 2014). In May 2014, the "136 Movement," with a significant social media campaign, including the #vote4water hashtag on Twitter, organized an unofficial referendum in which 98 percent of voters rejected privatization (Karyotis, 2014).

5.3.4.9 – SynAthina

SynAthina is an online platform[25] established by the Municipality of Athens, upon which civil society and community groups can publicize their activities. As described by Amalia Zepou, the Mayor's adviser on civil society networking, "SynAthina was the idea of the mayor [Giorgos Kaminis], who wanted to create a systematic and coordinated mechanism to link municipal services with civil society and community groups that have been emerging in the past few years in the neighborhoods of Athens" (personal communication, January 11, 2014).

Zepou notes that SynAthina, which was founded in July 2013, encompasses a "web platform, which has a site upon which community groups can upload the activities that they are going to do in the city, and it's also a mobile application," in addition to maintaining a presence on Facebook and Twitter. According to Zepou, SynAthina:

> …was first made to be used as a calendar of activities throughout the city, so that citizens of Athens can see what kind of activities are organized in their neighborhood, what date, what hour, and what kind of activity…the site has eight different categories of activities, from solidarity events to artistic events. (Personal communication, January 11, 2014)

Aside from listing community events in Athens, however, SynAthina has also helped generate linkages between civil society actors and groups. As described by Zepou:

> [SynAthina] has generated as new types of communication, new relationships between several different groups that did not know each other's existence. Another one was the use of SynAthina as a site of funding. People that want to participate in these activities by giving, not money, but helping in the activities themselves, for example buying garbage bags and offering them, so matchmaking between people who want to donate in kind, and those activity groups. Also, institutions that come up to be in contact with those activity groups, generating new initiatives, such as for example, the Council of Public Libraries of Attica have wanted to use SynAthina to come in contact with those groups to generate new initiatives around public libraries. (Personal communication, January 11, 2014)

[25] See https://www.synathina.gr/en/.

Finally, in addition to its internet presence and as noted by Zepou, SynAthina bridged the online and offline worlds via the "Stegi SynAthina," a physical meeting point in central Athens that is made available to civil society and community groups to hold meetings and organize their activities, offering free wi-fi internet (personal communication, January 11, 2014).

5.3.4.10 – Time Banks and Alternative Currencies

Yet another initiative which was borne out of the "Indignants" protest movement of 2011 was the Time Bank of Athens and Syntagma Square.[26] Based on the concept of an exchange or barter economy, the Time Bank provides a platform for members to swap goods and services.

As stated by Christina Papadopoulou, co-founder and member of the communications team for the Time Bank:

> [The Time Bank] began in Syntagma Square in May 2011, when the big protests were taking place. I was one of the first members…there were many people there with the same idea. There was a secretariat at the square where you could submit ideas for committees or towards committees. 5-6 people had the same idea for an exchange network…That's how this group got started, we began to hold meetings, we had a table at the square for 3-4 months…When the protests were dispersed, we continued to gather in various public spaces to hold meetings, and in October 2011 our website was ready. [Our website designer studied in San Francisco and participated in the local time bank], and so our website is a copy of San Francisco's. But [Syntagma] Square was very important, it was the space which united us. (Personal communication, February 2, 2014)

According to Papadopoulou, the Time Bank of Athens and Syntagma Square was the largest in the Athens region, with about 500-600 active users on its web application and a total of 2,300 accounts, while 1,200 individuals were members of the team's Facebook group, while no Twitter account had yet been created due to a lack of time and resources. Papadopoulou adds that "there is no leader, there is no hierarchy, all our members can participate in our meetings and make decisions…" (personal communication, February 2, 2014).

[26] See http://www.time-exchange.gr.

Regarding the Time Bank's social media use, Papadopoulou notes that it is not professional by any means, stating: "We use social media…to publicize our actions, our meetings…and to recruit…Those who are not members mostly find out about us from Facebook…The website is mostly for existing members," adding that the Time Bank is entirely run by volunteers and resources for the web are limited. In Papadopoulou's view, social media is politics, with the Time Bank representing an example. Papadopoulou expresses the political nature of the Time Bank, as well as her hope that its existence won't be ephemeral:

> We did not develop the Time Bank as an opportunistic solution during a period of crisis…The crisis may have been the cause but it's not the essence of what we are doing. We want the Time Bank to be a proposal removed from capitalism and the profit motive. We want it to be a way of life…We've seen in other countries where there was a crisis, such as Argentina for example, that many similar networks were created which collapsed when the crisis there ended…The public used them opportunistically only during that period. We truly want this to be a daily way of life and to lead us to the world we dream of, a world of solidarity, exchange, far removed from profit and the capitalist system, putting humans first instead of profit. (Personal communication, February 2, 2014).

Papadopoulou further states that it is difficult to gauge the Time Bank's overall impact on civil society, but that an important first step has been taken:

> Our contribution is very important as it proves that without money, without a budget, without support from any party or institution, you can do things to help yourself and those around you. For me it is a seed which has been planted, and this seed needs time to blossom. It is not an easy process, but the seed has been planted. But it still needs work. (Personal communication, February 2, 2014)

Papadopoulou further notes that the Time Bank has garnered media attention, but expresses the group's suspicion of journalists:

> We always eye journalists with suspicion, in the sense that we want to know who they are, what they do, why they are interested in us, because we are not interested in all journalists or the interests which are hidden behind them. We are selective and usually choose independent journalists and…independent documentaries…The problem is when they cover us superficially…that "there is a Time Bank and you can exchange services

> for free." That's a shallow approach. The correct approach is to explain why we exist and our underlying philosophy. (Personal communication, February 2, 2014)

Finally, Papadopoulou described the Time Bank's future plans, including finding volunteers for the group's social media presence, and to network with other time banks and to help them develop in every city in Greece, noting that they had already helped one such initiative launch in Lefkada. Papadopoulou also expressed an interest in networking with other groups within the alternative economy, not just time banks (personal communication, February 2, 2014).

The Time Bank of Athens and Syntagma Square is one representative example of an initiative operating within the alternative economy, which according to Roumeliotis, grew to be quite robust during the crisis, mentioning the existence of 50 time banks and 49 alternative currencies in Greece (personal communication, April 3, 2014).

5.3.5 – Survey Results: Views on Civil Society

Several valuable insights can be garnered from the results of the electronic survey questionnaires that were conducted across the three sample populations. The prevailing view among respondents was that the civil society sphere in Greece had not sufficiently developed in the post-military dictatorship period. Interestingly, representatives of civil society groups provided the lowest score, while newspaper editors and members of the European Parliament provided a slightly less negative view. Views were even more negative with regard to how well-developed civil society was in Greece at the present time. Here, members of the European Parliament provided, in relative terms, the highest ranking, closely followed by members of civil society groups, while newspaper editors ranked civil society's present-day development, and with all three samples in negative territory. Social media tools were viewed as having a relatively significant influence upon the growth and development of civil society in Greece, with civil

society representatives providing the highest ranking, followed closely by newspaper editors and members of the European Parliament, and with all three samples in positive territory. Social and new media's impact upon the growth and development of civil society initiatives was also viewed somewhat positively, with, civil society representatives again providing the highest ranking, followed by newspaper editors and members of the European Parliament, all of which were again in positive territory.

Further useful insights can be found in the special sub-questionnaire which was only made available to representatives of civil society organizations. Facebook was listed as the most-used social/new media tool, followed by Twitter, blogs and Google+, YouTube and LinkedIn, and forums and message boards. Social and new media tools were most frequently used for the purpose of publicizing meetings and events; followed by publicizing news about the organization and posting multimedia content; organizing meetings and events, providing commentary on relevant issues, and republishing news and content from other websites; then followed by communication and interaction with the public, and finally, the usage of such tools to hold online meetings or chats. Also notable was the fact that no group listed recruitment of new members or volunteers, or fundraising and requesting donations, as activities they conduct using social and new media tools.

Overall, social media's significance for these specific groups was viewed quite positively by civil society respondents across the board, while the impact of social and new media upon the respective movements' growth and development was viewed even more positively. Interestingly, when considering the previous non-response regarding the use of social and new media tools for the purposes of recruitment, social and new media tools were very highly ranked for their

significance in recruiting new members and for their positive impact with regard to recruitment. The significance and the positive contribution of social and new media in the day-to-day operations of these movements and organizations were also viewed highly positively, as was the significance and positive contribution of such tools for these organizations' ability to interact and communicate with the general public.

One-third of the organizations which responded stated that they had been founded in whole or in part via the social media, and most respondents stated that social and new media had helped their group communicate or coordinate action with other similar organizations. Also notably, three of the groups which responded listed their year of establishment as 2012, in the midst of the economic crisis in Greece, while one-third of the groups listed the "Indignants" movement of 2011 as a direct inspiration for their establishment. Finally, civil society respondents anticipated both a very significant and a very positive role for social and new media in relation to their organization's activities in the coming years.

5.4 – DISCUSSION

Many diverse perspectives were provided by the interviewees who participated in this study, regarding the potential overall impact of social and new media upon the Greek public sphere and Greek civil society, and the transformation or changes, if any, which have occurred due to the influence of these technologies. Perspectives were generally more positive for the role social and new media have played in bolstering Greek civil society, rather than the broader public sphere at large. Regarding the public sphere, opinions ranged from the development of a new public sphere, the expansion of the existing sphere, the increased visibility of previously marginal voices, and a transformation in the public sphere or split into alternative spheres, to

opinions which held that the previously-existing public sphere has merely been reproduced online, that new public spheres are ephemeral in nature, that public discourse has become shallow and devoid of substance, or arguments that there has been little to no overall impact or even a negative impact. Regarding civil society in particular, opinions also varied, from discussing a civil society that is more developed, a population that is more aware of what is happening around them, and the discrediting of traditional institutions such as the state, to descriptions of Greek civil society as "trendy" and doubts as to there having been any change or tangible effect, while some interviewees were largely unaware of its existence.

Hrisos describes a severe disruption of the hegemonic public sphere: "A lot of subjects that have been in the frontline of the news have emerged through social media…The media sphere has been severely disrupted by the social media and I believe that the corporate media will keep losing their power" (personal communication, July 2, 2013). Zenakos describes an opening up of the public sphere to more voices:

> It's obvious that we have taken up some space. We do determine or…affect a part of the discussion. How much is an open question…There are people that participate in a dialogue…and this dialogue has some relationship to the rise of more progressive political ideas in the central political scene. (Personal communication, July 19, 2013)

This expansion, according to Gazi, has given more people the opportunity to be opinion leaders:

> Greeks heavily use the internet, and so the public sphere moved there and there is pluralism…the internet was never censored in Greece. With social networks, political and social and sociopolitical dialogue moved there, with the result that online personalities began to develop which today have the opportunity to influence society…someone can now be an opinion leader…The way Greeks receive information has changed. It's spasmodic, sources are not checked anymore, it's often anonymous, but there is a lot of information available…Rhetoric changed, especially the written word. Greeks write a lot today, I think more than they ever did before, and we have for the most part all become, in some way, content creators. (Personal communication, January 11, 2013)

Karamanolis describes the formation of a parallel public sphere which cannot be ignored:

> There is a parallel digital public sphere which cannot be overlooked. You cannot make correct decisions as a politician if you don't follow it…One can express themselves within this sphere…you did not have this 5 or 6 years ago…You have the opportunity to express a political viewpoint and for it to be read by many. This completely alters the public sphere. (Personal communication, October 19, 2013)

Arvanitis describes a public sphere that has been reborn: "[Social media]'s influence is recognized and is impacting the public sphere which in Greece is being reborn, primarily by rupturing the traditional public sphere as we knew it since the fall of the dictatorship" (personal communication, July 4, 2013), while Fotinaki adds that "Outside of politics…and some specific [radio or television] programs, there was no direct communication…now anyone can express their opinion. This is a radical change versus the past" (personal communication, July 5, 2013). For Ypopto Mousi, the main impact is that "[p]eople that didn't have any voice before, now do…The existing system didn't let them…lots of people that wanted to do things [and] understood that they can actually do something. They don't need to wait 3 or 4 years to vote" (personal communication, June 27, 2013). Quick describes online discourse as being "more authentic," adding that even with all the noise online and problems with trolling, "I prefer this public discourse a thousand times over the non-existent dialogue in Parliament and the media" (personal communication, November 14, 2013).

Madalena Papadopoulou, president of the youth division of the Independent Greeks political party, notes that "in the past three years, due to the crisis…more youth are getting involved [in the public sphere]" (personal communication, November 11, 2013). Skarpelos also observes the re-involvement of the youth and a process of re-politicization: "[a]fter about 20 years of the public sphere being apolitical, it has become so again" (personal communication, May 29, 2013). Andriotakis adds that even if it is not always used properly, "[t]he biggest change

is that citizens have a platform to be heard" (personal communication, May 27, 2013). Tasos Oikonomou highlights a transformation which began during the turbulent period of December 2008 and which was further bolstered by the "Indignants" movement of 2011: "There the public sphere began to change. In Greece, with the movement of the 'Indignants'…such issues began to have a more organized presence in the public sphere…After 2008...the public sphere ruptured and changed," comparing this rupture to the historical shift towards a bourgeoisie public sphere (personal communication, April 10, 2013), while Boubouka highlights the importance of visibility in the online space, stating that "if something is not expressed [online] it will disappear from a very dynamic part of the public sphere" (personal communication, May 31, 2013).

Several other interviewees detected a split in the public sphere. Masouras notes that the online public sphere, as exemplified by Twitter, is unrepresentative of the public sphere at large: "[t]he sphere that operates on Twitter isn't exactly homogenous with the rest of Greek society…you see different tendencies, political tendencies in Greek society that aren't represented [in the mainstream]." Masouras further notes that "…mainstream Greek society nowadays is anti-austerity, all of it…there's hardly a segment of the population that…agrees with the austerity measures. That's also the same online. [However], political representation in the online sphere isn't the same as in the offline (personal communication, February 23, 2013). Gazi also described the public sphere as being split between pro- and anti-austerity voices, stating that "the sharpening of this divide is due to the internet" (personal communication, January 11, 2013). Skarpelos observes the formation of a secondary, alternative sphere to the political sphere:

> [Outside of the political sphere]…a margin has opened up for discourse between citizens, without political parties, in a secondary level that is a semi-public sphere, one which allows commenting, decrial, statements of support…and in a time of crisis where due to the economic situation very few people can dedicate their time to participate in a protest,

> or are afraid to participate in public expressions of resistance, [these tools] multiply the ability for citizens to share views. Where the "kafeneio" has ceased being a space to meet and share political perspectives…where the square, due to clashes with police, has ceased operating as a public space…the internet and social media have replaced them, have allowed this discourse to shift into this space. (Personal communication, May 29, 2013)

Gounaris, in turn, argues that "what social media have achieved is to transform the formerly private sphere into an [alternative] public sphere, open to all" (personal communication, October 8, 2013), while Panagiotis Oikonomou describes a public sphere as a "televisual democracy" that "is operating in lieu of the public," adding that society is closer to the rhetoric expressed on alternative mediums such as Radiobubble (personal communication, February 13, 2013). Broumas describes a clash between the old and the new public sphere: "[a]nother kind of public sphere [has formed] that collides with the old public sphere of the daily newspapers and the TV that's disintegrating right now (personal communication, July 3, 2013).

Oikonomides also describes a split in the public sphere, in adverse terms:

> At this time, I would say that the public sphere in Greece is…under threat…the streets, workplaces, unions, public parks…this is exactly what is being threatened…This is what is happening, either for political reasons, or because of violence or because people don't talk to each other any more, which is a very big problem. There are no places any more for people to meet, that's a problem. This means that the public sphere is not one, but has split into semi-private spheres. And then if you look in the left, which is the part of society that I know better, it tends to be split into smaller and smaller and smaller spaces, which means that nothing is public any more. It's all private or semi-private space. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Meanwhile, Thanos Andritsos highlights the mass media's reaction to the alternative public sphere, noting that pre-crisis may have given some limited coverage to a social movement, but are no longer doing so: "the space being provided to such movements in the official media is shrinking" (Personal communication, July 23, 2013).

Adamidis argues that online public discourse, despite theoretically allowing many or all to participate, has reproduced the level of discourse of the official public sphere: "Social media have managed to reproduce the same standards…we see that in Greece public discourse occurs without particular standards and indeed with great pathologies" (personal communication, April 10, 2013). Apostolopoulos also observes such a reproduction, which he connects with a culture of clientelism: "There is a mirroring…which is due to the fact that public discourse in Greece is characterized by irrationality and is impacted, in my interpretation, by the clientelist system, where you feel obliged to defend your side and not the other" (personal communication, May 24, 2013). Farmakis also notes this reproduction, stating "[t]he medium has changed, but the content has not changed. I think it's the same discussion that was before done in a cafe or in the place of work…It's the same, even the same atmosphere" (personal communication, April 15, 2013).

Kounenakis argues that there was a period of change, but that this was ephemeral:

> There is a tremendous change between the years of 2010-2012. These two, three years were very active and very intense as I told you, there was a lot of violence in the public sphere, a lot of rage, which at this point…what is called "movement" by many people, doesn't exist any more or it has died out. It has turned into either passiveness or isolation or people trying to survive in these terms, trying to make it through the day, but the political involvement has dropped significantly. (Personal communication, June 13, 2017)

Dimitrakopoulou puts forth a similar argument, referencing the ancient Athenian *demos*:

> The crisis is supposed to have changed the way we define the public sphere….If we take into account that the ideal type of democracy has started in Greece, we are somehow expecting that this ideal of direct democracy could be evident in modern Greece as well, but this was not the case in contemporary Greece…[W]e can see cases where the public sphere seems to be more empowered, that citizens are becoming more aware of the public issues and public affairs and that they are developing actions against politicians, but I see that so far they have been kind of specific cases and not kind of a whole change of paradigm" (Personal communication, July 5, 2013)

Furthermore, Dimitrakopoulou downplays social media's impact, stating "I'm not one of the advocates who say that social media have introduced a revolution. For me, they are more empowering tools, but only tools in the hands of people who would be active anyway" (personal communication, July 5, 2013).

Thanos Tzimeros, president of the "Dimiourgia, Xana!" political party, the volume of online information and discourse leaves no time for critical reflection: "A problem for me is that social media do not allow time to convert information to knowledge, convert knowledge to awareness, and transform awareness to wisdom. We are bombarded with unprocessed information and the time to sit and reflect…doesn't exist" (personal communication, June 5, 2013). Tasos Anastasiadis, an unemployed journalist formerly with the *To Vima* newspaper, highlights the issue of noise and information overload online:

> …people have the illusion that they have access to information and this is true…but it is deceptive. I believe there is a great deal of noise, the amount of information is staggering, you have the impression that you can find critical or alternative information. Often it may be true information but it's lost in the noise. (Personal communication, June 6, 2013)

Vasilopoulos adds his view that "public discourse today occurs on the basis of titles, headlines, and quotes, with no depth" (personal communication, August 22, 2017), while Christoforidis whether this has led to tangible change: "[Social media] provides pluralism despite the noise. Has this resulted in a significant change? In my opinion, no…generally the Greek people do not have access to a different type of public sphere" (personal communication, May 27, 2013).

Tolios questions the extent to which there has been an impact, stating: "I am not sure if…political dialogue within the public sphere is better than it used to be. It's more direct…more immediate and sometimes it can be…aggressive… I think that Greek society [is] much more political than it used to be" (personal communication, February 22, 2017). Krommydas argues

that “the public dialogue in Greece [remains] very much behind what we would consider as public dialogue in most other European countries” (personal communication, October 16, 2013), while Katerina Sitzani, a social media and communications volunteer with the To Potami political party, states that there is “no public sphere independent of mass media in Greece” (personal communication, November 11, 2014).

For Mandravelis, a problem is the aggressive nature of online discourse, which has replicated offline discourse: “In Greece unfortunately, the idea of dialogue is still a problem. This is evident in Parliament, but it is also evident below, in social media” (personal communication, June 11, 2013). Apostolos Mangiriadis, a political correspondent with Mega Channel, similarly states: “I’m very disappointed by the level of the political dialogue in the social media. I wouldn’t say they had an impact…I haven’t seen the mainstream voices yet, being the majority” (personal communication, July 23, 2013). Dimitrakopoulou adds that online political dialogue is usually “influenced by sentiment and not by political rationale. It’s not based on any form of structured deliberation. It’s spontaneous…personal attacks are also very frequent [and] evident. I’m not sure that this can lead to an organized development of public dialogue” (personal communication, July 5, 2013). In turn, for Aganidis, “[w]hat is most influential after the crisis is social media as a means of expressing rage. Pre-crisis it was a means of organizing information, participating, of thought and dialogue…anger, indignation and the discrediting of the political system have led to logic being crushed” (personal communication, December 16, 2012).

Turning specifically to civil society, Roumeliotis highlights the important role that civil society plays in Greece today. Describing it as an alternative third sector, Roumeliotis argues that “Greece is standing on its feet today due to the largest social solidarity movement ever seen in

Europe," which he compares to post-Soviet Russia or to crisis-hit Argentina. Roumeliotis further adds that there are "so many groups it's unbelievable," and that the mass media has not covered this phenomenon (personal communication, April 3, 2014). According to Afouxenidis, today there are over 6,500 civil society groups in Greece, though approximately 80 percent of them are situated in Athens. Afouxenidis highlighted the proliferation of neighborhood and citizen groups in the years of the crisis, as a result of the space created by the major political rupture of this era (personal communication, December 16, 2016). Boubouka notes that "while social media existed, the crisis had to arrive for people to search for a means of expression, survival, collaboration in order to face their challenges…Neighborhood collectives...would have been unheard of until recently" (personal communication, May 31, 2013). Zoehrer credits social entrepreneurship groups with preventing a political revolt in Greece, stating "it is considered a form for Greece…that would foster against an upheaval in the country" (personal communication, June 4, 2013). Koskinas adds: "throughout the centuries, [Greek culture has] survived by developing community organizations rather than state organizations. And the community organizations that we are right now looking at in Greece now…develop in virtuality. Communal life in Greece has been almost disappeared" (personal communication, June 6, 2013).

Koutzoukou focuses on volunteerism. Highlighting the role of social media and referencing a survey conducted by HumanGrid, she says the results showed "exactly that there has been an increase in volunteerism in recent years in the midst of the crisis" (personal communication, February 12, 2014). Foteinou, in turn, argues that Greek society now displays less of an individualist nature: "[Greeks] are more sensitive to social issues. That's what I see, civilians are more sensitive…they try to offer something back to society. They don't care only

for themselves, but also for the progress of their society (personal communication, December 14, 2012). For Konstantopoulou, social media have "strengthened personal relationships," fostering new civil society initiatives (personal communication, February 15, 2013).

For Vlachos, civil society organizations have been "freed" from a prior mentality where "each collective did not believe that it could achieve its objectives in collaboration with other communities" (personal communication, November 26, 2013), while for Karamanolis, social media "are the primary tool for self-organizing, networking, and transferring experience and best practices from one organization to another" (personal communication, October 19, 2013).

Papastravrou highlights the role of social media in helping people bypass the state: "[w]hat we have seen is that the crisis has made the people start to get more interested in what was happening around them…as people take things into their own hands instead of waiting for them to be solved by the state" (personal communication, April 15, 2013), while Oikonomides adds that traditional civil society institutions are also being bypassed: "[t]he traditional civil society's structures have failed so badly, people are going for something entirely different now…bypassing the traditional structures, not only the state, but also all the traditional structures that you would expect to fulfill that role" (personal communication, December 17, 2012). Chatzistefanou, however, notes the potential dangers of fully discrediting traditional institutions: "I'm afraid that we are losing some experience gathered by trade unions, by political parties. People hate these institutions, but unfortunately they throw away also the experience that was gathered through many decades" (personal communication, June 26, 2013).

Panagopoulos differentiates the Greek civil society sphere from that of the associational-based civil society of United States, pointing out that "[h]ere we have communities around

surviving the crisis and everyday life. We don't have niche groups" (personal communication, May 31, 2013), while in the view of Lardikou, this may just be a fad: "I think the crisis built the need for [civil society] in a trendy way" (personal communication, February 20, 2013). Masouras points out the lingering suspicion in Greece towards NGOs in particular: "[c]ivil society in Greece is a controversial topic for many people [because the] NGO sector [has] a bad reputation at large…the word NGO by itself causes suspicion" (personal communication, February 23, 2013). Theodoridis notes that NGOs "had a very negative stigma" and that despite improvements in recent years, "the majority…associates MKO negatively," adding that in many Greeks' minds, civil society is still associated exclusively with volunteering, not a career. Theodoridis further states that "[In Greece] we are still far away from even the most modest, low levels of other countries…this has to do with people's attitudes and people's attitudes do not change in such important issues overnight" (personal communication, January 27, 2017). Thanos Andritsos questions the true impact of social and new media on civil society, asking whether those who are being helped (such as migrants) even have internet access (personal communication, July 23, 2013), while Bakounakis notes that no citizen pressure groups exist "to fight against unconstitutional laws" (personal communication, March 8, 2013).

Finally, perhaps highlighting the divide between the "official" public sphere and the citizenry, one final notable observation comes from two professional journalists who admitted that they were not very aware of civil society and activity taking place within this sector. Mangiriadis stated that "I'm not the right person to answer the question because I haven't been following [civil society]" (personal communication, July 23, 2013), while Efimeros said that "I have not followed this [civil society] very much" (personal communication, July 18, 2013).

Chapter 6: Social and New Media's Influence on Political and Social Movements

6.1 – INTRODUCTION

Since the fall of the military dictatorship which governed the country between 1967 and 1974, the Greek political system has operated as a multi-party parliamentary republic. National elections are scheduled every four years—even though snap elections are not an uncommon occurrence—for representation in Greece's unilateral Parliament, which consists of 300 seats that are distributed across regional electoral districts. A system of weighed proportionality is used to determine the distribution of parliamentary seats, while the first-place party in the elections, regardless of percentage, receives a 50 seat parliamentary "bonus."

From the fall of the junta up until the onset of the economic crisis, the two dominant political parties in Greece were the center-left PASOK (Panhellenic Socialist Movement) and the center-right "Nea Dimokratia" (New Democracy) party. However, numerous smaller political parties existed, and at least one smaller party was always represented in parliament. In recent years, however, starting with the onset of the crisis, the incumbent political structure has splintered: the shares of New Democracy and especially PASOK have collapsed, while the previously marginal SYRIZA (Coalition of the Left and Progress) made rapid gains and won the January 2015 and September 2015 snap parliamentary elections, ruling during that period in a coalition government with the newly formed populist-right "Anexartitoi Ellines" (Independent Greeks) party. Numerous other smaller parties have also managed to enter parliament in recent years as the electoral map has increasingly splintered, with two additional smaller parties, LAOS (Popular Orthodox Rally) and DIMAR (Democratic Left), each having the opportunity to co-

govern at separate times as part of broader governing coalitions. There is a 3 percent electoral threshold in order for a party to attain parliamentary representation.

As of this writing, parliamentary elections were most recently held in September 2015, while every five years, elections for the European Parliament, where Greece presently holds 21 seats, are held. These elections were last held in May of 2014, concurrently with elections for local municipalities and regional governments in Greece, also for a five-year term.

Recent years, however, have also seen the rise of large-scale political protest movements in Greece, as signified by the "Indignants" protests held in central squares of Athens and other cities and towns in the spring and summer of 2011, and the ongoing and highly politicized activist movement against the controversial gold mining activities in the Skouries region of northern Greece. While political protests, demonstrations, and strikes have long been a part of the landscape in Greece, the size (in the case of the "Indignants") and longevity (in the case of the Skouries movement) of these protests are unique in Greece's modern history.

In this chapter, the influence and impact of social and new media on political and social movements in Greece during the 2011-2017 time period will be analyzed. This analysis will examine the ways in which social and new media may have contributed to political change, changes in political behavior, or the formation of new political movements in Greece, how public institutions have employed social and new media to engage with the public, and how social and new media potentially contributed to the formation or growth of protests and activism surrounding various causes in Greece. This will be accomplished through a focus on one of the five illustrative examples of this study, the Independent Greeks political party, as well as an examination of social media use by other political parties, including Greece's major parties as

well as smaller and newly-formed political parties and movements. The impact of social and new media on electoral contests will also be examined, as well as examples from the implementation of social and new media tools by government ministries, municipalities, and upstart political movements. Turning to social movements, the "Indignants" protest and Skouries movement and their usage of social and new media tools will be examined in detail. Results from the electronic survey questionnaire pertaining to both political and social movements will be presented and analyzed, followed by a discussion of the overall impact of social and new media upon such movements. This analysis will directly correspond to RQ2 and subquestions 1 and 2 of this research project.

6.2 – Illustrative Example: The Independent Greeks Political Party

6.2.1 – Introduction

In a word, the "Anexartitoi Ellines" (Independent Greeks) can be described as a phenomenon, one that was directly borne out of the economic crisis. Founded in February 2012, the Independent Greeks have developed a reputation in Greece of being "the party of Facebook," as the party announced its launch via this particular social medium and conducted many of its early public deliberations via this platform as well.

Panos Kammenos, president of the Independent Greeks, referred to the Independent Greeks as "a popular movement, not a political party" (personal communication, October 11, 2013). Within months of its establishment, it attained electoral shares of 10.61 percent and 7.51 percent in the parliamentary elections of May and June 2012, respectively.[27] Since January 2015, the Independent Greeks have been the minority governing partner in a coalition with SYRIZA.

[27] See http://ekloges.ypes.gr.

6.2.2 – Establishment

Kammenos stated that the establishment of the Independent Greeks can be attributed entirely to social media, and described the party's early activities using these mediums:

> The founding of this movement and its visibility and sustentation are exclusively due to social media and will remain so…I often hold referendums, even for candidates [via social media], the whole movement was built via social media and the party's platform was developed with public deliberations which took place on Facebook. I can say that over 35,000 people participated from the first moment and that almost the entire platform of the party was developed by people whom we do not even know. 100 percent is due to social media and we were the first movement in Europe that was developed using these tools. (Personal communication, October 11, 2013).

Kammenos further stated that it was citizens communicating with him via social media who convinced him to start his own political party, after being a member of parliament with the New Democracy party for 21 years: "The citizens with whom I had a dialogue on Facebook were those who motivated me to develop this movement, and that's how it was born" (personal communication, October 11, 2013). Ioannis Moiras, secretary of the department of political strategy for the Independent Greeks, further explained how Kammenos launched the party:

> Kammenos was very deeply involved himself in social media, with an…extremely popular Facebook page and…a frequent and very keen Twitter user…as a member of parliament, he already had a wide circle of friends and co-users…within the world of social media…He announced his decision to go against the existing political system and vote against the memorandum and he found not only wide popular support through social media, but also a huge massive claim for something new, for a political party that would actually vote and stand against…the memorandum…This political movement started from the social media with a direct involvement of 200,000 users, who sent some very serious input regarding the political manifesto of the party and the whole effort for its establishment…through e-mails, Facebook, direct messages on Twitter…something that had never happened in this country before. (Personal communication, February 15, 2013)

Vasilis Syriopoulos, a communications adviser with the Independent Greeks, provided additional insight into the online deliberation which took place: "The public deliberation was based on our founding manifesto…which supported certain specific positions…the proposals we received had

to be compatible with it" (personal communication, October 13, 2013). Communications adviser Katerina Tsatsaroni, in turn, stated that Kammenos "wanted to come in direct contact with the citizens. The only way to do this…was via social media. There is no better way" (personal communication, October 13, 2013). Syriopoulos added that "this was the first time in Greek history that the president of a party came in direct contact with the public on a daily basis" (personal communication, October 13, 2013).

Tsatsaroni also mentioned that in the early days of the party, the Independent Greeks recruited candidates via social media:

> The selection of parliamentary candidates occurred through an invitation sent out via social media. Ordinary citizens sent us résumés, came to our offices, and were selected as candidates by a committee…most of our members of parliament right now do not stem from political backgrounds…most were professors, lawyers, ordinary citizens. (Personal communication, October 13, 2013)

Rachel Makri, then a member of parliament with the Independent Greeks, explains how she came into contact with Kammenos prior to the formation of the party, and how she was invited to declare her candidacy for Parliament via social media:

> I heard a speech of Mr. Kammenos' after he resigned from New Democracy…that led me to look for him on social media, I became his friend on Facebook, and together with others we contacted him, exchanging our views and concerns, and we asked him to establish a party. He was reluctant at first but he later formed this party…Kammenos' idea was to select young people who were not connected to politics…but he also developed a team of older parliamentarians who had voted down the memorandum… when the ballots were being prepared and because in Greece 30 percent of your candidates must be female and because the party was having difficulty filling out its lists of candidates, I was invited by Kammenos' advisers to contribute, to become a candidate from my district [Kozani]. I ended up campaigning on my own exclusively via social media, with no office, no budget or anything else, coming into contact with the public only via the internet" (Personal communication, November 12, 2013)

Regarding the public deliberation and selection of candidates, Terrence Quick, a member of parliament with the Independent Greeks and the party's press representative, stated:

> We used social media, Twitter and Facebook and also blogs, to discover who would be interested in running as a candidate with us, as well as how we would organize, how we would develop our first volunteer organizations and local chapters in the periphery…We posted our platform online for deliberation. We posted the names of our parliamentary candidates online to gauge local reaction. We all passed through a process of public deliberation. (Personal communication, November 14, 2013).

According to Dimitris Yalourakis, a social media volunteer with the Independent Greeks, it was "an order from [Kammenos], that he wanted the public to participate…to contribute to the development of our platform and proposals…We took all these [proposals] and inserted them into our political platform…developing our final pre-election proposal," further noting that the party attempted to reflect the way the average Greek was thinking. Significantly, Yalourakis also added that the party's social media presence was influenced by the protests of the "Indignants": "The Independent Greeks were developed with the same model which was developed for the squares" (Personal communication, December 15, 2012).

Moiras noted that the Independent Greeks were also influenced by political developments in the United States: "It's necessary to confess that we stole experience and ideas and background from America, from the Barack Obama campaign" (personal communication, February 15, 2013), while Yalourakis added that aside from the Obama campaign, there were also strong influences from Germany's SPD (Social Democratic Party of Germany) and Scandinavian parties (personal communication, December 15, 2012).

Notably, Tsatsaroni, now the press representative for the Independent Greeks and for Kammenos, who is now Greece's Minster of Defense and who has worked with Kammenos since 2000, indicated that the party's use of Facebook during its inception was part of a broader communications strategy: "Things are not as simple as people believe…from 2000 we've had a specific strategy…and in November 2011, we developed our new strategy with Kammenos as

the protagonist on social media and especially Facebook, and we were active around the yes-no issue," referencing the heated memorandum versus anti-memorandum divide at that time (personal communication, March 6, 2017).

The initial social media efforts of the Independent Greeks caught the notice of other interviewees for this study. Baganis noted that with the contribution of social media tools, the Independent Greeks "were founded within 10-15 days" (personal communication, December 19, 2012), while Batzoglou highlighted the Independent Greeks as "the most characteristic example of a party which attained electoral success…without a budget…starting from zero and utilizing new media" (personal communication, May 24, 2013).

6.2.3 – Entering Parliament

Moiras states that the participation of the public via social media was vital for getting the Independent Greeks voted into Parliament:

> …this movement became very massive because of the participation of so many users and the direct communication with the president…We increased our impact on young crowds and you can find that in the analysis of the election result and in all the surveys that we have been examining for the last ten months…you become more familiar, more friendly, more close to the people, especially young ages, so it really was a pivotal point for our electoral success, the use of social media, because getting 10 percent the first elections was really surprising and magnificent a result for a new party. Let me point out that the Communist Party of Greece, has been operating for…almost a century, right? They never had the chance, or succeeded to catch such a percentage of 10 percent. So it was a surprising result and a magnificent result, and social media really played a very serious role. (Personal communication, February 15, 2013)

Alcestis Baboussi, director of social media for the Independent Greeks, stated that "without social media, what we accomplished in two months would never have been possible. [Social media] are our alpha and omega" (personal communication, December 15, 2012).

Makri noted that, as a result of utilizing social media exclusively for the 2012 elections, "[t]here was no access from older people who did not use [social media]…but to a large extent, young people used social media and discovered me there" (personal communication, November 12, 2013). Syriopoulos noted that the party receives many messages each day from individuals who are not technologically savvy, but who created social media accounts to communicate with the party (personal communication, October 13, 2013), while Kammenos shared his experience from a visit to an isolated village in the Greek region of Evros, where in a "kafeneio" he encountered an elderly man who stated he had heard of Kammenos from YouTube, describing how his "grandson brings his laptop and connects it to the television set in the kafeneio and plays the videos" Kammenos posts (personal communication, October 11, 2013).

Finally, Syriopoulos emphasized that the party did not have a communications team set up during the period of the May and June 2012 elections, with volunteers handling these responsibilities (personal communication, October 13, 2013).

6.2.4 – Usage of Social Media

Yalourakis described the difference between the way the Independent Greeks utilize social media, compared to other parties: "For our party, social media listen. For other parties, social media speak. That's the key difference" (personal communication, December 15, 2012). Makri, accordingly, described the party's utilization of social media in the following terms:

> …we are the party that truly uses social media, as the other parties have not organized their social media presence. We even have a social media department…organizationally I have not seen this in any other party. I've seen social media usage only on a personal level, by the members of parliament and personnel themselves, but not so much by the parties. We publish everything online, even our new party platform which we announced a few days ago was posted online… (Personal communication, November 12, 2013)

Kammenos described the manner in which he uses social media tools as the party's leader:

> I personally respond via Twitter and Facebook to all our voters, I post items before they are officially announced by the party. I am the only administrator. No one else has access to my account on Facebook and Twitter. I do not use communications experts, they have no place in my postings on Facebook and Twitter. I respond personally to the citizens and am available 24 hours per day. [My phone] is next to me even when I sleep and I attempt to be perpetually in contact with the citizens…My postings are often not politically correct, I post videos, some songs or photographs…this is not the usual style of communication for a political leader of an elected party, but I remain who I was before the party was born and that is how I will remain. This is often misunderstood by Greek society, which is a little conservative. (Personal communication, October 11, 2013)

Makri, in noting her own social media use, emphasized that she is not a career politician:

> I will say that I personally administer my [social media] accounts myself. I attempt to respond to all of the messages I receive from citizens, to read them all, and I have introduced many issues in Parliament…even from individuals who are not from my electoral district but who contacted me…I am not a professional politician…I was an ordinary citizen…Therefore I would not like somebody else to [post on social media] for me, as I consider it an expression of my own thoughts towards others, a personal communication and contact with how the citizen thinks and how I communicate. (Personal communication, November 12, 2013)

Makri further noted that she uses Twitter more than Facebook, with the bulk of the material she posts consisting of press releases and announcements, though there were occasions where she would respond to other politicians, citing an exchange she had on the day of this interview with the outspoken then-government minister Adonis Georgiadis (personal communication, November 12, 2013). Conversely, Quick, who has a journalistic background stated that he writes his own press releases and authors his own tweets, but prefers face-to-face contact with the public: “I use Twitter only to post my announcements, my press releases. I do not use it to engage in dialogue with the public. I assure you that I prefer to have a more constructive dialogue on the street” (personal communication, November 14, 2013). Syriopoulos noted that at the time the party first entered parliament, none of its elected representatives “were informed as

to how to utilize social media, so we took on the task of training them" (personal communication, October 13, 2013).

Kammenos stated that the party "will continue to communicate with the citizens…and the citizens with us, deciding together the party's positions and policies via the social media, which will continue at a level of importance of over 90 percent [for the party]." Kammenos added that "[w]e will not turn to traditional media and we will try to implement direct democracy via communication with the citizens" (personal communication, October 11, 2013).

Papadopoulou described how the party's youth department utilizes social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and a blog. She noted that in comparison with the New Democracy youth wing (ONNED) or the Community Party Youth (KNE), the Independent Greeks aim to utilize social media "not just for sloganeering and exhortations but to make an argument" (personal communication, November 11, 2013).

Regarding the party's structure with regard to operating its social media presence, Moiras stated that "[h]aving no money, we try to be competitive in regards with other parties, and we do that practically with volunteers," while adding that the party's social media posts are unmediated: "[w]e don't use to impose any kind of strict rules or tactics upon our members or even executives. We really prefer to be very sincere and very direct when we use our social media" (Personal communication, February 15, 2013). According to Yalourakis, as of late 2012 there were five people officially on the party's social media team, in addition to volunteers and members of the party's youth, adding that "there's no specific methodology" employed with regard to the social media presence of the Independent Greeks. Yalourakis further added that following the 2012 elections, the party's website was deemphasized in relation to their social

media accounts, stating: "[w]e want the website to plainly be the source of information for the party organs, meaning the press releases from each department, from the president, from the members of parliament" (personal communication, December 15, 2012).

Tsatsaroni agreed that social media played an immense role in the electoral success of the Independent Greeks, but said that (as of 2013) there were plans to better organize the party's social media presence, warning that "going forward, they could be catastrophic, if you cannot place social media within a context, a structure, and assign roles and an objective to each page. [If this doesn't happen] then it will become a 'kafeneio' [in the negative connotation of the term]" (personal communication, October 13, 2013).

Reactions from other interviewees regarding the social media presence of the Independent Greeks were also notable. Mangiriadis (personal communication, July 23, 2013) and Farmakis (personal communication, April 15, 2013) mentioned the party's effective use of social media tools, while Karvounopoulos cited Kammenos as the politician who "best understood" the potential of social media (personal communication, June 28, 2013). Conversely, Krommydas expressed the view that the populist rhetoric of the Independent Greeks is "much more easy to disseminate through social media" (personal communication, October 16, 2013), while Heimonas described the online rhetoric of the Independent Greeks as "based on conspiracy theory" (personal communication, February 15, 2013). In turn, Safioleas cited Kammenos' often bombastic nature as a possible factor for his success: "Perhaps the medium, because by definition it allows easily for a motto, for a scream, less for a discussion, it avails itself more to people like him" (personal communication, July 10, 2013).

One final noteworthy observation comes from the party's handling of an internal crisis in January 2013, following the sudden resignation of several members of parliament and members. According to Baboussi, in contrast with the significant and often sensational coverage of the mainstream media regarding this issue, the party, via its social media platforms, "handled the situation in a low-key way," stating that articles were released unofficially to blogs and to Facebook pages friendly to the party, but that the party itself made no social media postings about the issue other than its official press release (personal communication, January 24, 2013).

6.2.5 – Impact and Importance of Social Media

For Kammenos, one of the most significant ways in which social media impacted the Independent Greeks was by delivering the youth vote. As stated by Kammenos, "if you examine the qualitative analysis [of our voters], 90 percent are between 18-44 years of age, while our shares for voters over the age of 65 are in the single digits" (personal communication, October 11, 2013). Papadopoulou noted that this demographic profile is reflected in the party's leadership ranks, "where even in organizational committees of the party there are people below the age of 30" (personal communication, November 11, 2013). Kammenos further noted that "out of our elected members of parliament, I was introduced to 90 percent of them through Facebook. I did not know them beforehand" (personal communication, October 11, 2013).

Kammenos noted that the party's emphasis on social media is in contrast to its stance towards traditional media outlets: "we are totally isolated, by our own choice, from all the newspapers. We have no access to any newspaper, other than sending press releases," adding that the ESR had penalized major Greek television stations for not providing airtime to the Independent Greeks as a parliamentary party (personal communication, October 11, 2013).

According to Yalourakis, Greece's major television stations "are under 'orders' in order to not provide any coverage of the Independent Greeks," describing the impact on the party as "a major problem…especially how to communicate to those over the age of 50" (personal communication, December 15, 2012). Tsatsaroni added that "very few [television stations] give us airtime, and when they do, their coverage is negative. Therefore for us [social media] are a necessity" (personal communication, October 13, 2013).

In response to this media blackout, Yalourakis stated that plans were in the works on the part of the party to develop an online television presence: "our only solution is web TV. That's the most important initiative we are working on right now…," while mentioning that the party also was planning to launch an e-magazine (personal communication, December 15, 2012). Baboussi added that the party planned to bolster its Twitter presence, which in contrast to the fiery rhetoric of Kammenos' personal account, was mundane, containing mostly press releases." Baboussi also stated that for the party's upcoming congress, a social media platform would be developed in order for members to submit ideas and proposals (personal communication, December 15, 2012). Moiras further clarified this, stating the party's readiness "to elect some congress members through this platform" (personal communication, February 15, 2013). Finally, Yalourakis stated that the party's use of social media will not change even if it enters government (personal communication, November 2, 2013).

6.2.6 – 2017 Follow-up

Some interesting contrasts are evident in the manner in which the Independent Greeks political party utilized social media as of 2017, as compared to the 2012-2013 time period.

According to Tsatsaroni, the party's high level members, including Panos Kammenos, continue to use their own Twitter accounts, but the party's official Twitter account defunct: "[w]e usually use Twitter in a satiric way, in a way to answer to New Democracy and other parties. We don't use it actually, we don't have a strategy on Twitter. Our strategy is, we have to answer. That's it." As stated by Tsatsaroni, this limited use of Twitter was due to a lack of resources: "[i]t's a matter of having the resources to have such a Twitter account…you need a huge team actually…to have a strategy and to implement this to Twitter, so it's almost impossible."

Tsatsaroni added that the party's official Facebook page remained active, and that each regional coordinating body had its own Facebook page as well. Communication online was, according to Tsatsaroni, connected to "communication strategy pillars…the main…pillar that we have is anti-corruption…to reveal the scandals, to change the whole system with transparent procedures." Notably, Tsatsaroni also mentioned the party's relationship with unofficial blogs: "Like every other party in Greece, we have blogs. Not blogs of Independent Greeks, but blogs that support the Independent Greeks…As you realize, I can't tell you the names of the blogs." In addition, Tsatsaroni mentioned the party's strong presence on YouTube, while one similarity with 2013 was the official website's continued use as a bulletin board of press releases and party announcements. Tsatsaroni mentioned that the party now operated with approximately 100 people working on its social media presence, but that only two individuals, Kammenos and herself, were responsible for strategy (personal communication, March 6, 2017).

Tsatsaroni noted a certain "division of labor" amongst party personnel with regard to their social media postings, where different members of the party and parliamentary representatives tweet about specific topics, such as one MP (Dimitris Kammenos) tweeting about

religious issues. Tsatsaroni also described the party's careful stance towards governing partner SYRIZA, responding on social media "only if the party's ideology is attacked…we will never come out firing first against SYRIZA however" (personal communication, March 6, 2017).

The Independent Greeks openly campaigned as an anti-memorandum party in 2012, but quite ironically, according to Tsatsaroni this strategy changed in both the January and September 2015 elections to a message portraying the Independent Greeks as the party that "can implement them in the fairest possible way," while attacking the New Democracy party for corruption and emphasizing the weaknesses of SYRIZA. Tsatsaroni mentioned that the same public relations company was hired to handle the party's television and social media campaign for both of the electoral contests in 2015, campaigning as the "moderating force" of the electoral system in January 2015, and stressing the need for an "experienced" party such as the Independent Greeks to be in Parliament, in the September 2015 campaign, while emphasizing the party's key platform issues, including taxation and religion (personal communication, March 6, 2017).

Perhaps the most notable statement of all, however, came in relation to a question posed about the party's interaction with the public via social media, a key aspect of the party's early web presence. Tsatsaroni stated: "[w]hoever tells you that there is an organized dialogue on the part of any party with the citizens is lying" (personal communication, March 6, 2017).

6.3 – Electoral Contests and Social Media

Aside from the meteoric electoral rise of the Independent Greeks political party, social and new media could be said to have played an important role for at least some of the parties which have participated in elections dating back to at least 2009, at a local and national level, and also for the European parliamentary elections of 2014.

Though these two electoral contests occurred before the 2011-2017 that this study has focused on, the 2009 national parliamentary elections and the 2010 local elections are notable, as they provide early examples of social media usage and implementation which became more common after 2010. The 2009 elections, as noted in chapter 5, were won by PASOK under the leadership of Giorgos Papandreou, and a major plank in the party's electoral platform was transparency and e-governance. This emphasis was evident in PASOK's campaign as well. As stated by Papachatzis, the party organized an online discussion with citizens in 2009, which in 2012 moved to *enikos.gr*. Also in 2009, an online debate between various experts was also organized by PASOK, one which in later years moved to the *protagon.gr* news and opinion portal, and then to Google Hangouts (personal communication, October 12, 2013). Quick feels that social media "was one of the basic reasons why Papandreou grabbed the vote of the Greek people in 2009" (personal communication, November 14, 2013).

Social media were said to have played a direct role in the outcome of the 2010 mayoral elections in Athens. According to Gazi, Giorgos Kaminis was able to defeat his opponent Nikitas Kaklamanis, who was favored, due to a communications gaffe on the part of Kaklamanis which social media users at the time picked up on. Despite little mainstream media attention, the gaffe went viral on Facebook and Twitter in the week prior to the elections, overturning the result in Gazi's view (personal communication, January 11, 2013).

It is the 2012 national parliamentary elections, however, which could be said to have been the first elections where social media began to play a leading role for many of the parties which were participating, including the aforementioned Independent Greeks. According to Iliadi,

the 2012 electoral contest was where many politicians began using social media as a campaign tool for the first time, but perhaps not with the intended results:

> Many began campaigning [on social media] believing [it would help] or doing so because they had been told that there were a lot of potential voters on social media, and they began a dialogue with the public. But many fell into a trap. They were used to talking without receiving a reply…when they started receiving responses, they began arguing, banning, blocking, and this was not good for public discourse. To ban someone means you don't have an argument to make. (Personal communication, May 26, 2013)

For Quick, the most significant impact of social media on the 2012 elections involved young people, stating: "I believe that in [the 2012 elections] social media helped the promotion of young and middle-aged candidates from all parties and backgrounds" (personal communication, November 14, 2013), while Fotinaki attributed the impact of social media during the 2012 electoral season to the growth of online discourse: "…more and more people are…expressing themselves online, and one person influences the other. Most people have a specific perspective they express online, and if I come in and read everything, there's a good chance I will be affected or swayed" (personal communication, July 5, 2013).

Zenakos highlights the potential impact of the digital divide and possible differences in how people with internet access voted in 2012, compared to those who were not online:

> If you look at the qualitative analysis of the results…you would see that the so-called anti-memorandum parties and particularly SYRIZA had a majority in urban areas, mostly younger generations, mostly well-educated people, and mostly either public- or private-sector employees. Private sector voted SYRIZA by majority, basically people that you would probably describe as more active in their everyday pursuit of news and political expression. New Democracy on the other hand was voted overwhelmingly in rural areas, older ages, farmers and…housewives. There is a correlation here. You can't quantify it, but it stands to reason that those people in rural areas, of a lower educational standard or self-described housewives, are mostly informed from TV. It would again stand to reason that a person who works in an office, probably works at a computer, probably has access online…In some social groups, the pressure of social media was felt, and you can see this because traditional media were overwhelmingly pro-memorandum, pro-government to a scandalous degree, yet you had all these people that somehow got their information,

> somehow SYRIZA got the message out, so there has to be a mechanism for that…We can't quantify it, but that's probably it. (Personal communication, July 19, 2013)

Kapi also cast light on this potential digital divide, highlighting the results of a survey conducted prior to the June 2012 elections, where approximately 80 percent claimed that they had not gone online to read the campaign platforms of any party (personal communication, June 3, 2013).

In looking at the performance of specific parties, Adamidis highlighted the efforts of New Democracy, which "attempted to do a lot of work with new media in the last elections with dubious results, while smaller parties for some reason, perhaps due to the sense they are excluded…were more successful in spreading their message via new media" (personal communication, April 10, 2013). In the opinion of Tasos Oikonomou, the economic crisis, the subsequent anger felt by many citizens, and the closure of many publications led much of the public to go online. Parties that had the best presence on social media were, therefore, those which benefited the most in the 2012 elections, naming the Independent Greeks, SYRIZA, and Golden Dawn in particular (personal communication, April 10, 2013). These same three parties were the biggest electoral beneficiaries according to Heimonas, but for a more indirect reason. As stated by Heimonas: "the internet played a major role, not so much during the election period but previously, via the development of the so-called 'anti-memorandum bloc.'…I believe it was responsible for the strong numbers received by SYRIZA…Golden Dawn and the Independent Greeks" (personal communication, February 15, 2013). Specifically looking at Golden Dawn, Dimitrakopoulou argued that despite their weak official online presence, "they are very effective in spreading their views and in using mirror sites for reposting what they post online." In addition, Dimitrakopoulou argues that a media blackout of Golden Dawn prior to the May 2012 polls may have also helped the party:

> In the first elections of 2012, the Golden Dawn members didn't appear in any media, either traditional or online, so no one knew who these people were, what they looked like, the traditional media excluded them from the political debates, especially on television. After the results of the first elections, there was a growing debate that how could Golden Dawn get that high a percentage in the elections, and many people…blamed their lack of presence in the media for their high percentage. (Personal communication, July 5, 2013)

For others, the results of the 2012 elections were most notable for the success of small political parties. Notably, in the May 2012 elections in particular, 19.02 percent of the total vote was received by extraparliamentary parties, a higher percentage than the first place party, New Democracy, which received 18.85 percent.[28] According to Psara, social media played a major role "in the visibility of smaller parties…due to the intense doubts towards the political system in the past three years [of the crisis]" (personal communication, November 11, 2013).

Antri Constantinou, a social media and communications volunteer with the To Potami political party, also noted the example of the "Drasi" ("Action") political party and the potential "magnifier effect" of the social media. In her words: "[Drasi] in 2012 which had a huge presence on the internet. If you were going online you would think that it would do well in the elections. In the end it received one percent" (personal communication, November 11, 2014).

Electoral contests in 2014 and 2015 seem to have been marked by the popularity of online question-and-answer sessions, primarily via the Twitter platform. In the 2014 mayoral elections in Athens, upstart candidate Gabriel Sakellaridis, supported at the time by SYRIZA, organized a live Twitter interview via his profile, @gabriel_athens ("Sizitisi," 2014). Though Sakellaridis did not win, was said to have been aided by his strong social media presence.

Leading up to the 2015 national parliamentary elections, Alexis Tsipras, leader of the then-opposition SYRIZA party which was favored to win, organized a live question-and-answer

[28] See http://ekloges-prev.singularlogic.eu/v2012a/public/index.html #{%22cls%22:%22level%22,%22params%22:{%22level%22:%22epik%22,%22id%22:1}}

session via Twitter, utilizing the #asktsipras hashtag. This session was moderated by several prominent Greek Twitter users at the time (SYRIZA, 2015). This interview session was so popular that it was the third most popular "trend" on Twitter on that day, with approximately 32,000 tweets in total (January 14, 2015) ("Oxi na allaxoume hora," 2015). Prior to the September 15 snap national parliamentary elections, other parties followed SYRIZA's example, organizing Twitter interviews of their own, including the To Potami political party, using the #askstavros hashtag named after party leader Stavros Theodorakis, and ANTARSYA, via the #ask_antarsya hashtag, which trended first on the Greek Twittersphere on September 14, 2015.[29]

6.4 – Impact of Social Media on Major Political Parties

6.4.1 – New Democracy

New Democracy, the majority governing partner in the coalition government which was in power in Greece between June 2012 and December 2014, was not viewed particularly positively by most interviewees in relation to its social media use. A general consensus seemed to exist that New Democracy did make efforts to build up its social media presence, but without the expected results. Dourou described New Democracy's usage of social media as such:

> The way New Democracy approaches social media is so instrumentalized that very quickly many citizens who would have wished to be informed via these accounts were turned off, just as they were turned off by many privately-owned [television and radio] upon discovering that they don't represent news but specific interests. (Personal communication, July 3, 2013)

Kyriaki Petriti, DIMAR's press officer, cited demographics for New Democracy's perceived lack of social media success: "New Democracy is making an attempt but I don't know how successful it is, because New Democracy has older voters" (personal communication, October 7, 2013).

[29] See http://www.news247.gr/politiki/askstavros-o-stayros-theodwrakhs-apanthse-sto-facebook-kai-dexthhke-to-apolyto-troll-attack-sto-twitter.6372919.html, https://www.facebook.com/pringr1/photos/a.796295687097401.1073741827.294868020573506/976528222407479/.

Among more successful aspects of New Democracy's social and new media presence, Farmakis indicated that blogs may be an area of online success for New Democracy: "New Democracy relied more on the blogosphere. They have a network of associated bloggers and so they distribute blog posts. So it's a party that uses that in a different way, depending on their target group" (personal communication, April 15, 2013). Kranidiotis, who had previously been a candidate with New Democracy and who advised Prime Minister Antonis Samaras, chose to speak in generalities about the party's social media presence, stating that "there are always interventions and organized responses on the social media on the part of the Prime Minister's press office and the party and the government" (personal communication, December 6, 2013).

Adopting an entirely different view, Thanos Andritsos described New Democracy's online rhetoric in highly negative terms:

> I believe that this government in particular is a very extreme right-wing government, and the methods that it uses online in its official rhetoric…resembles the rhetoric of the right in Greece during the civil war. It is extremely anti-leftist, anti-communist, anti-worker, it uses unprecedented lies and defamation…it is strongly based on distortions and on flirting with the most extremist, racist, sexist, nationalist viewpoints which exist within Greek society. (Personal communication, July 23, 2013)

Much of the blame for such rhetoric was ascribed to New Democracy's so-called "Omada Alitheias" ("Truth Team"), an anonymous online group of internet users which intervened in discussions on Twitter, Facebook, and elsewhere, promoting New Democracy's positions. Kranidiotis once again spoke in generalities regarding the "Truth Team" and its effectiveness:

> [Such teams] exist in all parties from what I know, there are organized teams which track social media and intervene…this is true for all, not just the government. If you ask me to evaluate it…I would say that the attacks [New Democracy] receives are such that you would need a whole army to deal with it… (Personal communication, December 6, 2013)

Vaxevanis shared the view that all political parties operated similar teams, before focusing on New Democracy's "Truth Team," and its alleged leader, Giorgos Mouroutis, a close adviser of then-Prime Minister Antonis Samaras:

> The "Truth Team" of Mouroutis is indeed an example…other parties have such teams…but since we are talking about the "Truth Team," this is a team of young people from DAP [New Democracy youth organization], hiding behind an avatar and pretending to be ordinary citizens. The problem isn't that they disagree with you or restore the "truth"…They are profane towards the writer…they attempt to diminish his credibility. The "Truth Team" is a profanity team. (Personal communication, March 6, 2013)

For Chatzistefanou, efforts such as the "Truth Team" exposed the weaknesses of these parties:

> …it didn't help them. In a way, it showed some small weaknesses of some politicians, because of the way that they have to react immediately, without being able to ask for support from professionals, they just enter and reply and you see how stupid they are, or how aggressive they might be…You have the example of the press officer of Prime Minister Samaras, George Mouroutis, who is replying to everything in a way that could be my nephew, a 10 year old boy…and you say, before that you couldn't expect that a guy like that would be in such a serious position within the government. So in a way, it shows some weaknesses. (Personal communication, June 26, 2013)

Many interviewees, however, highlighted Adonis Georgiadis, at the time a government minister with New Democracy, as a highly effective Twitter user, despite his often controversial nature. Zenakos, responding to a common perception that the Greek Twittersphere is dominated by the left, stated: "As a counterargument, you get some of the most active Twitter users people like Adonis Georgiadis for example, who is perhaps one of the most competent Twitter users that I've seen. He's completely on the right" (personal communication, July 19, 2013). Finally, Boubouka cited Georgiadis as an example of increased sophistication in social media use:

> You see Adonis Georgiadis…who lives and breathes Twitter, two years ago he was like every last person on the far-right, tweeting silly things in all-caps, whatever he discussed in 'kafeneia' with various types…and suddenly now he tweets in such a way that you can't believe it's the same person" (personal communication, May 31, 2013).

6.4.2 – SYRIZA

Long before the 2015 elections where SYRIZA rose to power, and well before the success of #asktsipras, SYRIZA had begun to develop a reputation of a party that was both youth-oriented and friendly towards social media and new communications technologies. In January 2008, when Tsipras was a candidate for the leadership of the party, which was still known then as "Synaspismos," an online interview was organized with prominent bloggers, which was live streamed and posted on YouTube and *blip.tv*.[30] This was followed by another online interview with well-known bloggers in 2011.[31] These videos could be said to have boosted Tsipras' image as a youthful leader who was tuned in to social media and new technology. Vlachos agrees with the view that SYRIZA's message was successful with young voters, stating "SYRIZA had an excellent online campaign and drew the attention of the youth, who would have voted for them anyway, but when they see something dynamic and fresh they gravitate towards it" (personal communication, November 26, 2013).

Moiras cited SYRIZA as having the biggest social media presence at the time of the 2012 elections and afterwards, other than the Independent Greeks (personal communication, February 15, 2013), and this seems to have been the case prior to the 2014 and 2015 elections as well. Referencing SYRIZA's online interviews, Tolios, who was then a member of SYRIZA, states:

> In my opinion, it was really smart to present Tsipras, and in the European elections of 2014 or the municipal and the local administration elections of 2014, to present the respective leaders, Tsipras or Gabriel Sakellaridis in Athens, or [Rena] Dourou, and expose them in open social media dialogue through Twitter. This was a really effective strategy, not because it actually creates a…strong political dialogue with solid arguments, but rather because of its symbolic value, that "I am a candidate, I am not afraid of anything, I am not afraid of exposure, and here I am answering all of your questions." And I think that this had really good feedback. I think that artistically speaking, the

[30] See http://www.mediafire.com/download/o9tdbz43wa1ldrq/o+alexis+tsipras+stous+bloggers.mp3.
[31] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OvDzhDLeEU.

> presentation, illustration, web design and promotion of the electoral campaign of SYRIZA was really, really strong, and was a milestone for ages to come, and of course we should not forget the role of the youth. I mean, for example, I can recall very, very good video from the youth of SYRIZA, which very vividly and in an abstract ways could make young voters really relate to the problems that were presented, mostly about unemployment and immigration and so on. (Personal communication, February 22, 2017)

Tolios adds his view that it was an excellent strategic move to hold the #asktsipras Twitter debate in 2015, as the outgoing Prime Minister had not agreed to a televised debate: "[That year], Samaras, the Prime Minister, chose not to have a TV debate…social media actually covered a lot of ground that was left empty, because of very little television exposure of political debates. Tolios added SYRIZA's successful articulation of the message delivered by the "Indignants" movement in 2011, as another factor in the party's success: "SYRIZA really took all the political essence of this movement and said 'what you were trying to say, I am going to take it to the Parliament." That's why it was so successful" (personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Aside from the "Indignants" movement, SYRIZA was viewed as having benefited by the protest movement surrounding the shutdown of ERT in June 2013. As stated by Vasilopoulos: "SYRIZA took advantage of this dynamic, with its strong presence [at the protests] and its promises to restore ERT" (personal communication, August 22, 2017). Tolios ties SYRIZA's success among young voters with its strong connection to grassroots movements more broadly:

> Being a member of SYRIZA at that point, I strongly believed that this was our really strong point, that the campaign was operated by people with a lot of experience in social media and on grassroots movements that also played a very vital role in social media political dialogue…younger people…that could actually relate to social media, I think that SYRIZA made a much more successful campaign that actually hurt other left-wing parties. (Personal communication, February 22, 2017)

Petriti attributes some of SYRIZA's success to a network of affiliated sites, stating: "SYRIZA has been aided by social media, because it has a team that handles them well [and associated

websites] such as *Red Notebook* and *left.gr*. All of this helps" (personal communication, October 7, 2013). Dourou, however, noted that mediums such as "*Avgi* [SYRIZA's newspaper] and 'Sto Kokkino' [SYRIZA's radio station] do not have the reach that the major media possess…" (personal communication, July 3, 2013).

Finally, as a candidate and member of parliament with SYRIZA, Dourou stated that:

> I take into account the fact that I represent thousands of citizens and the main opposition party. I also attempt to be instructive [with my online behavior], because there is an incorrect manner of approaching such mediums on the part of the government and the Prime Minister's office, the rest of us have to display morals…To be specific, I do not enter [online] dialogues easily—whereas in the past I would have—to joke around about political figures about other parties. I am careful with the words I use…I try to operate on Twitter and Facebook more maturely. (Personal communication, July 3, 2013)

Dourou stated that she decided to show restraint with her social media use during her electoral campaign in 2012: "If one goes back…[they will see] that I was probably more restrained than I was before or since, as I did not want to seem like I had just discovered social media and was deploying them for my campaign," adding that in her next electoral contest, "I will abstain [from social media]…for the reasons I stated earlier and because the personnel of SYRIZA don't forget that battles require a physical presence…during the campaign I will be with the public at kafeneia and neighborhoods…" (personal communication, July 3, 2013).

Notably, popularity online does not necessarily translate to popularity at the ballot box, as seen by the example of Asteris Masouras. Tachiaou highlighted his candidacy with SYRIZA in the 2010 municipal elections in Thessaloniki, where despite his active social media presence, "Asteris unfortunately had the incredible number of 58 votes in Thessaloniki" (personal communication, February 23, 2013). This could be viewed as an example of social media's potential to create a "magnifier effect."

6.4.3 – PASOK

In chapter 5, the initiatives introduced by PASOK in the 2009-2012 time period pertaining to e-governance and digital transparency were introduced. While platforms such as "*Diavgeia*" and "Illegal Signs" were introduced to the broader public and could be said to have been successful to a great extent, PASOK also implemented many such initiatives for its internal party affairs. Masouras noted that while the post-2012 PASOK was quiet, they had previously pioneered online political discourse: "PASOK…tried to promote the idea of accountability through 'open data,' and that was vocally promoted…After the memorandums were signed and the government collapsed, they have been quiescent mostly, because center-left politicians are torn between parties and they're fragmenting (personal communication, February 23, 2013).

Karamanolis detailed the implementation of e-government tools for its internal operations, including an online policy deliberation platform[32], and committees of online volunteers (personal communication, October 19, 2013). These largely went defunct after the PASOK government collapsed in late 2011. Vlachos described PASOK's efforts at the time as centered around two core areas: "…democratic participation and effective governance through transparency and accountability," adding that for its internal operations, "we developed a database, direct mail and newsletters, many online forums, online streaming, at a time when the others did not know what these were" (personal communication, November 26, 2013). As summarized by Boubouka, "PASOK was the first to bring social media to politics. This may have to do with its relationship with the Anglo-Saxon political sphere which first adopted these ideas. PASOK copied them and imported them to Greece" (personal communication, May 31,

[32] See https://web.archive.org/web/20120102011032/http://dialogos.pasok.gr:80/xoros/, https://web.archive.org/web/20110818142332/dialogos.pasok.gr/programma.

2013). Stavros Katsoulis, a member of the communications team of the United Popular Front (EPAM) political party, noted that "while such tools may have at times helped with citizen feedback, the end result was that they did not prevent the political collapse of PASOK" (personal communication, May 30, 2013), while Farmakis notes that the 2009-2012 period was the only period where "they were really very innovative in using [social media]" (personal communication, April 15, 2013).

The general consensus amongst interviewees was that PASOK had, since 2012 at least, been hurt by social media. Aphrodite Al-Saleh, a former social media volunteer with PASOK, stated that "PASOK is very weak on social media because it is the de facto space where PASOK and all its personnel are attacked" (personal communication, January 11, 2014). Odysseas Konstantinopoulos, then-deputy Minister of Development and a member of parliament elected with PASOK, argued that "PASOK suffered a crisis in 2009 when social media were inundated by people who were negative towards our party, and used [social media] as a defamatory mechanism," adding that "this began to change after the 2012 elections…our supporters on the internet made a strong showing and today…we have great penetration in the social media space" (personal communication, September 3, 2014). Mangiriadis posited that

> PASOK wasn't ready…they didn't have a unit that would respond to attacks…during the whole period that they were in power…They were hurt because a lot of people came up from social media on Papandreou being a traitor, putting us down to the IMF. A lot of that was generated in that period" (Personal communication, July 23, 2013)

For Zoehrer though, PASOK's decline was not impacted by social media in any way: "No. They failed on their own…PASOK simply got, let's say, its penalty for not doing what it said it would do before the elections" (personal communication, June 4, 2013).

Konstantinopoulos stated that as of 2014, PASOK primarily used Facebook and Twitter for its social media presence. In looking at its electoral campaigning in 2012 and 2014, he stated that "PASOK's campaign was not centered around social media to the extent it is in other countries," though there was an emphasis on Facebook. Regarding his personal social media use as a politician, he stated that he maintains two Facebook accounts and a Twitter account that he alone posts to, while his associates maintained his Facebook "fan page." Konstantinopoulos added that he used social media "as a tool of interactive communication," and that he receives 20-30 messages a day from citizens. Finally, Konstantinopoulos expressed his reluctance for using social media extensively for the purposes of campaigning, due to the prevalence of trolls (personal communication, September 3, 2014).

6.4.4 – Communist Party of Greece (KKE)

The political party which has the reputation of being perhaps the most averse to social and new media in Greece is the Communist Party of Greece (KKE). This apparent aversion was noted by several of the interviewees who participated in this study. According to Broumas, the KKE "had a critical stance on the internet," and "banned its members from writing on the internet, at least openly, [saying that] whoever is a member of the Communist Party should not write, because we should only have the official views of the party on the internet" (personal communication, July 3, 2013). Masouras adds: "[t]he Communists aren't online at all…there have been some vocal alpha-bloggers who sell themselves as Communists and are very vocal in favor of the Communist Party, but by and large the Communist Party is offline, by choice" (personal communication, February 23, 2013). Tolios notes that the KKE has lost young voters to parties such as SYRIZA as a result (personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Boubouka, however, notes a slow embrace on the part of the KKE towards social media: "The KKE attempted to abstain from this space and snubbed it openly…but [recently they launched] *902.gr*, where they live-blogged…they likely realized suddenly that there exists an audience and a means of covering news…which they had missed out upon" (personal communication, May 31, 2013).

Liana Kanelli, a member of parliament elected under the KKE banner, provides her insights into the party's stance towards social media:

> We don't use it for electoral campaigning. We use it in a journalistic, informative and communicative way. There is a big blog [*902.gr*]. They abandoned the idea of television [former KKE-owned station 902 TV] and all these things. So, the ideas, the critiques, the conferences, everything is published in this blog. You can get in, you can find out, you can use the videos, you can spread your ideas. But if you wash this, you will never find, and this is something that truly makes me proud about the Communists, you will not find easy speech…Sometimes they accuse us of being difficult, not being "pop," but you cannot speak on the problems of people, use them to make a film that is going to sell a few tickets and then abandon them. So it is a tool for politics, but…the party believes and I personally agree with them, that face-to-face experience and speaking and conversation will never disappear from this world. (Personal communication, June 11, 2013)

Finally, regarding her own use of social media, Kanelli notes that she does not maintain a social media account, but a popular "friends of" page had been created for her on Facebook, where for a while she participated in online question-and-answer sessions. In the words of Kanelli:

> At least once a month, I [tried] to do it live…this happened for a few months and then, dead end. Why? Three hours were not enough, four hours were not enough. Questions and requests were 5,000, 10,000…so I apologized and I said "You can write anything you want. If I need to answer, I will answer. (Personal communication, June 11, 2013)

6.5 – IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON SMALLER POLITICAL PARTIES

6.5.1 – ANTARSYA

ANTARSYA[33], the "Front of the Greek Anticapitalist Left," is an extraparliamentary party which is actually a coalition of various movements and groups of the far left in Greece, and which is notable for being "leaderless," instead being led by a governing committee.

Thanos Andritsos, at the time a member of the governing committee of ANTARSYA, stated that social media had greatly helped the movement, particularly before the first national parliamentary elections of 2012. As explained by Andritsos, a press office was formed by ANTARSYA which was staffed by younger people who were experienced with social and new media, many of whom were bloggers. This staff "managed for a month and a half to combine the traditional workings of a press office, which issues press releases, sends them to the media, follows up by phone…with the usage of new media, including online press conferences and chats." Andritsos highlighted the importance of ANTARSYA's online presence at a time where the party, which supported a Greek exit from the Eurozone, was shut out of discussions about the issue on mass media outlets: "…we were among the few political forces which had a clear position in favor of leaving the euro. There were thousands of discussions on Greek television about this and we were not invited to even one" (personal communication, July 23, 2013).

According to Andritsos, the party operated a website which incorporated multimedia tools such as audiovisual content, two Facebook pages (an official page and one belonging to the party's press office), a Twitter account, and a YouTube channel. Most local ANTARSYA committees also maintained a Facebook presence and a blog, while Andritsos also noted the party's close relationship with 10-20 widely-read blogs. Andritsos also stated ANTARSYA's

[33] See http://www.antarsya.gr.

intention to launch an online news portal which would be favorable to the party and also contain "alternative news" (personal communication, July 23, 2013).

6.5.2 – Democratic Left (DIMAR)

Founded in June 2010 by longtime politician Fotis Kouvelis, DIMAR ("Democratic Left")[34] entered parliament for the first time in the May 2012 elections and served as the third governing partner of the government which was formed following the June 2012 elections, alongside New Democracy and PASOK. DIMAR's participation in this coalition government lasted for one year, until June 2012, when it departed following the shutdown of ERT by the state. The party began a period of decline following this and participated in the "Dimokratiki Symparataxi" ("Democratic Alignment") electoral coalition along with PASOK in the September 2015, managing to elect one of its own candidates as a member of parliament.

Giorgos Palamarizis, IT Director and head of new media for DIMAR, stressed the importance of social and new media for DIMAR: "DIMAR, because it does not have a big budget for its campaigns, and as a younger party, placed a great emphasis on new media," listing the party's active presence on YouTube, where all audiovisual content pertaining to the party, including media appearances, speeches, and announcements, would be posted and then shared via Facebook and Twitter (personal communication, October 4, 2013). Petriti mentioned the party's official Facebook page as well as separate Facebook pages for each local branch of the party and online groups—open, closed, and secret—for party members, Twitter, YouTube, and accounts on Flickr and del.icio.us. As stated by Petriti, all of the above were primarily used for posting interviews, speeches, newsletters, press releases, and parliamentary proceedings

[34] See http://www.dim-ar.gr.

(personal communication, October 7, 2013). In essence, these mediums were used as an online bulletin board, as is commonly seen with other Greek political parties.

Petriti also noted one way in which the party's online and social media presence was used after its departure from the governing coalition: "When we left the government…all of our ministers, not only ministers, the people that were working for the government…they wrote [a report of] what they did in the last year, and we published all that through social media" (personal communication, October 7, 2013).

Palamarizis noted the impact of the party's social media presence on its electoral results:

> It was a major impact, and this was noticed by the global press…We were interviewed by the Associated Press and CBS, who were surprised by how quickly we organized our campaign. We were only [on social media]…we do not have our own newspaper or radio or television station, so the full weight of our campaign was there, and I believe we were successful as we had very good results, particularly among the generations that use Facebook and Twitter. (Personal communication, October 4, 2013)

Petriti added:

> [W]e used [social media] a lot, because we were a new party and we didn't have a lot of money…We used Google Hangouts a lot, we used Twitter, we used YouTube so that we can broadcast some speeches and our spots…We used a lot of Facebook…It was a very good tool, especially Facebook. (Personal communication, October 7, 2013)

Regarding DIMAR's social media practices, Palamarizis stressed that "we have one rule, which is not to negatively comment. We do not troll at all, we only answer on a political basis, and I think this is respected by a large part of the community." He added that there was no party-wide policy for what its elected representatives could post on social media and that "every member of parliament and every staffer…has the freedom to say what they want," referring to the unmediated content posted on Facebook and Twitter by the members of parliament themselves (personal communication, October 4, 2013). Petriti noted that the party's social

media presence was mostly managed by volunteers, with only one professional staffer (Palamarizis) (personal communication, October 7, 2013).

Finally, Palamarizis noted DIMAR's future social and new media plans, including the launch of a web radio station and an e-magazine (personal communication, October 4, 2013), while Petriti stated that the party planned to expand its use of social media in the 2014 European parliamentary elections and at its party congress (personal communication, October 7, 2013).

6.5.3 – Dimiourgia, Xana!

Another party which earned a reputation in Greece as having launched via social media is "Dimiourgia, Xana!" ("Recreate Greece")[35]. Officially founded on March 11, 2012, the party managed, within two months, to receive 2.2 percent of the votes in the May 2012 parliamentary elections. As stated by the president of the party, Thanos Tzimeros, who is also a columnist with *protagon.gr* and *Athens Voice*, the party did not consist of politicians, and publicly "raised issues which up until then were taboo," adding that the election result was a surprise: "[w]e weren't expecting such a high figure...and all of the polls had us below 0.5 percent. Notably, no poll mentioned us until the elections…either they were way off or something else was happening. We know that often polls are part of the political game" (personal communication, June 5, 2013).

Tzimeros credits the party's social media presence for its early success: "[this] technology is what allowed parties like ours to have such reach and such growth so quickly." Notably though, Tzimeros admitted that he was not a social media user and did not like Facebook and Twitter: "I hated Facebook, because I felt you lose your time on worthless things…I also disliked Twitter…because in 140 characters it is difficult to express an opinion without it being misunderstood," noting that he prefers writing articles and commentaries.

[35] See https://www.dimiourgiaxana.gr.

Nevertheless, Tzimeros notes that the party's first Facebook group was launched a day before the party itself was officially launched, and that the party maintained both an open and a closed Facebook group, noting that there were about 20 regular writers and 100-200 individuals who commented regularly. Tzimeros added that approximately 10 people were involved in managing the party's overall social media efforts (personal communication, June 5, 2013).

Tzimeros emphasized that social media was especially important to the party as it was a victim of "diaploki" on the part of the major media outlets, stating: "[t]he media treated us as a sideshow initially. They could not imagine our momentum…but overall they were positive. When they saw we received 2.2 percent, their stance changed," adding that television stations operated on a "pay to play" basis, where the party would have to pay a certain amount of money in order to secure a certain amount of appearances (personal communication, June 5, 2013).

In addition, Tzimeros noted the party's implementation of e-voting tools: "We are the only party up until now in Greece which has elected the president and committees via electronic voting, indeed using a tool developed by the state, the 'Zeus' system'…" Tzimeros also stated that the party avoids expensive print jobs of posters and pamphlets, stating that a younger person can print such material for an older relative (personal communication, June 5, 2013).

Tzimeros, through his social media presence, was no stranger to controversy. Two such instances resulted from tweets where Tzimeros warned about the "Islamic threat" in Europe, and where he commented on an incident where two students died of carbon monoxide poisoning after lighting coal inside their apartment, writing that it was a sign of failure of the Greek educational system that they had not been taught about the dangers of carbon monoxide.[36] According to

[36] See http://www.news247.gr/koinonia/tzhmeros-gia-tragwdia-sth-larisa-einai-thymata-paideias-kanenas-den-toys-didakse-tis-idiothtes-toy-monokseidioy-toy-anthraka.6196277.html.

Tzimeros, the meaning of these tweets was intentionally twisted "in order to defame myself and Dimiourgia, Xana," adding that "social media create a secondary level of 'he said, they said' news" (personal communication, June 5, 2013).

Finally, Tzimeros stated his party's goals to develop online radio and television platforms in the future (personal communication, June 5, 2013).

6.5.4 – Dimokratiki Simmahia

"Dimokratiki Simmahia" ("Democratic Alliance")[37] was a liberal-right party founded in 2010 by Dora Bakogianni, the daughter of former Greek Prime Minister Konstantinos Mitsotakis. Though the party was disbanded after the May 2012 national parliamentary elections, Bakogianni's name recognition helped the party garner a fair amount of mainstream attention.

One of the most visible candidates with the party was Gregory Farmakis, who was on the party's ballot for the May 2012 elections. As stated by Farmakis, he maintained a very visible presence on Twitter prior to becoming a candidate:[38] "I used social media a lot before the campaign…I had a very good and a very consistent presence in social media, especially Twitter, and a quite successful blog, which was, I say it was quite successful based on the statistics of the visits." Farmakis, however, noted that during his electoral campaign, he deemphasized social media, focusing more on television, radio, and the press. In his words:

> Social media is not something that you can [exclusively] focus on for a campaign…A lot of politicians, either professional politicians or amateur politicians like me, did something wrong: they only used social media during the campaign…but nobody really cares about that in the social media sphere…During the campaign, things go so fast and because it was a very [brief] campaign, these elections were [one month away], so you do not have the time to…engage in the social media, because you have to go and see people live, in public…you don't have the time to engage in social media interactions. I used social media during the campaign to distribute material and to advertise [media appearances],

[37] See https://web.archive.org/web/20120520083844/http://www.dimsim.gr.
[38] See https://twitter.com/gregoryfarmakis.

> but only…as complimentary to the typical campaign. I think that in elections, the art of coming in contact with persons is much more important, real contact, going to people's houses and speaking. So during the campaign, the social media were only complimentary, but before it was the main instrument. (Personal communication, April 15, 2013)

Nevertheless, Farmakis stated that usage of social media as a "bulletin board" by politicians is ineffective: "If the account becomes too impersonal, like okay, this is a press release, than nobody pays attention anymore," adding that this was a mistake made by "Dimokratiki Simmahia": "…the people who are doing this thing in the parties, the communication experts, tend to see these as another mechanism of distributing press releases. So they had a mailing list and they had a list of journalists, now, okay, they tweet a press release. This is boring for people." Farmakis listed three primary ways in which he believes social media should be used politically: commenting, debating, and distributing information with added commentary. Farmakis shared his view that politicians should engage with social media themselves rather than through an intermediary: "…you have to do it personally. People readily understand where it is not you that uses the account," adding that "I had people assisting me with the Facebook page, loading, preparing the material, the videos or the radio recordings, but for the comments no, it was me" (personal communication, April 15, 2013).

For Farmakis, social media served as the impetus for entering politics:

> In my case, the political activity came as a result of the social media activity…I became known for my opinion and my work due to the social media, and that's how I had proposals from different parties and finally chose this one, but I had proposals from different parties to cooperate with them. I think that for people who are more active citizens, so to say, social media is a very effective way to showcase what you have to say. But this is something that you have to keep on doing. This is not something that you do only for elections. (Personal communication, April 15, 2013)

Finally, Farmakis further stated that he planned to be involved in politics again, but would make some changes to the way in which he uses social media:

> When you're not a full-time politician…you don't have the luxury to do it as a full-time job. Social media there can be quite effective, because you can continue to be involved at a low cost, in terms of time. So I will do it and I will use it heavily. What will I do differently? In the previous elections I used more Twitter and less Facebook, because of my personal preference for the Twitter medium. I love Twitter because of its brevity and incisiveness. Facebook is more verbose. But I think that Facebook is really more far-reaching than Twitter, or even a blog…Having posts on Facebook can be much more influential than having a typical blog…I will put more emphasis on Facebook…What I will do differently is that I think this time I will hire a professional to organize that, because if you want to do it very effectively in a short time, then you really need somebody who knows the tricks of the trade. So next time I will have some budget for a professional communication expert. (Personal communication, April 15, 2013)

Finally, as with the previous example of Asteris Masouras, Tachiaou highlighted Farmakis as an example of an online "magnifier effect," where an individual's popularity on social media does not necessarily lead to votes. Highlighting that Farmakis received only a few hundred votes despite his large online following, Tachiaou stated: "Gregory Farmakis' campaign proved that social media did not work at all" (personal communication, February 23, 2013).

6.5.5 – Enosi Kentroon

The "Enosi Kentroon" ("Centrists' Union")[39] is not a new party on the Greek political scene, as it was founded in 1992. However, the party was elected into the Greek parliament for the first time in the national parliamentary elections of September 2015. Vasilis Leventis, the president of the "Enosi Kentroon," was himself known to audiences from the television station which he owned in the 1990s, "Kanali 67" (later renamed "Kanali 40") and his television program, which remained on the air up until the time of his election to parliament.

Leventis noted that the party's website is named "antidiaploki," referencing the prevalent issue of "diaploki" in the Greek political and media sphere, where the party also operates a web TV station in addition to a presence on major social media platforms. As stated by Leventis, "I

[39] See http://www.antidiaploki.gr.

can't say that we've made a great deal of progress. We're still at the beginning but we've understood that we have to invest in this area in order to not fall behind." Nevertheless, Leventis credited social and new media with helping the party in the September 2015 elections, particularly in the city of Thessaloniki, where the party had its strongest showing: "They played a significant role, particularly in Thessaloniki, where some young people reproduced some of my old videos and the nine planks of our platform and made them available to the public," adding that the videos of his old television appearances which circulated proved that what he had said in the past was correct, thus resonating with voters. Leventis further noted the party's popularity on YouTube, with videos garnering up to 40,000 views (personal communication, March 22, 2017).

Nonetheless, Leventis notes that he does not use Facebook, hailing "from a different generation," but noted that a Vasilis Leventis parody account on Facebook ultimately helped bolster his popularity, adding that other members of parliament from the party do use social media for their work. Finally, Leventis noted that for future electoral campaigns, "I will make appearances [online] every few days if I see that I am censored by the television stations. I will give 5-10 minute talks, because I've found that it's short videos which attract the largest audience" (personal communication, March 22, 2017).

6.5.6 – EPAM

One party which perhaps more than any other made a name for itself as an anti-memorandum and pro-"Grexit" movement is EPAM ("United People's Front"),[40] popularly associated with the outspoken economist Dimitris Kazakis.[41] As stated by Stavros Katsoulis, a member of EPAM's communications team at the time:

[40] See https://www.epamhellas.gr.
[41] See http://dimitriskazakis.blogspot.com.

> EPAM was born out of the demonstrations of 2010-2011. These demonstrations were to a great extent organized by the use of social media…there is a petition that we have received from that movement, which was to use social media and the internet to expose our positions and organize ourselves. (Personal communication, May 30, 2013)

Regarding the party's social media use, Katsoulis stated: "Currently EPAM uses the most popular, available methods of socializing its message, which means Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google+…and also we use a few custom applications within the organization in order to communicate our users' information in a more productive way," adding that Facebook is the most-used social medium for EPAM (personal communication, May 30, 2013). Regarding Facebook's importance in particular, Katsoulis stated:

> I think the most important way we use Facebook is to deliver an alternative message to the people in order to then be able to have a different view and a different explanation of current events, because progressively in the last three years the official mainstream media has evolved into a completely one-sided view of things, and basically it does not present an alternative view, and if it does present an alternative view, it presents it in the context of complete negativity. (Personal communication, May 30, 2013)

Regarding Twitter, Katsoulis adds: "Twitter is a little bit different: we usually use it in order to make our views perceivable by specific people who belong to the social sphere, in order to create awareness, and in order to social dialogue on specific issues." Katsoulis also emphasized the role of blogs in EPAM's communications efforts:

> EPAM has its main blog…and many dozens of blogs belonging to the main cause of EPAM or to the wider groups. Individuals have their own blogs and also there are third-party blogs, perhaps people who don't belong to EPAM but who post the most prominent writers, bloggers, articles and positions. (Personal communication, May 30, 2013)

Katsoulis also mentioned EPAM's expansion on YouTube: "practically any event, especially talks about Dimitris Kazakis or other members of EPAM, or events, demonstrations, are… immediately posted on YouTube. Also lately there has been an attempt to create more quality videos and also documentary-like productions." Nevertheless, Katsoulis emphasized that "our

position is that the connection we must develop with the people must be a real-world connection. Whatever social media we use, our aim is to meet in person in the real world and not get entangled…in the virtual world." According to Katsoulis, EPAM's communications team began as an unofficial group but later became official, consisting of 6-7 individuals involved directly with EPAM's social media efforts (personal communication, May 30, 2013).

Katsoulis noted that Dimitris Kazakis used to host a radio program which was shut out of a mainstream radio station, leading EPAM to turn to web radio, noting, however, the difficulties in attracting a new audience: "It seems that it is much easier to get new listeners from by using real FM radio rather than web radio. Web radio has the same audience that we already have." Despite this, Katsoulis highlighted the importance of social and new media for EPAM due to the lack of coverage the party enjoyed from the mainstream media: "Mainstream media in a practical sense, did not present EPAM at all" (personal communication, May 30, 2013).

6.5.7 – Golden Dawn

The most controversial political formation in Greek politics is undoubtedly the far-right Golden Dawn party ("Xrysi Avgi" in Greek).[42] Golden Dawn is not new, publishing a magazine since 1980 and participating in politics since 1993, but it did not enter the Greek Parliament until the elections of May 2012, in the midst of the country's economic crisis, and has been re-elected ever since, including earning representation in the European Parliament in the 2014 elections.

According to Vasilis Karakostas, a representative of Golden Dawn's parliamentary press office, "the television channels, the press do not broadcast our positions. They have shut us out. Therefore the only way for the public to learn of our positions is our own mediums…our

[42] See http://www.xryshaygh.com.

website, newspaper, and magazine" (personal communication, June 12, 2014). Karakostas described Golden Dawn's unconventional approach to social media and the internet:

> We do not maintain anything official [on social media], just our website...However, personnel, members, and supporters of the movement are asked to help influence the public on the internet, via Facebook, Twitter, or anywhere else. Also on YouTube. We are speaking of isolated instances and of individuals who are not paid for this work. It is their own voluntary effort. (Personal communication, June 12, 2014)

Karakostas stated that he did not know why no official social media accounts were maintained, but noted that the aforementioned setup "is especially beneficial," adding that social media:

> …have given us the opportunity to be in direct contact with the public…and for the public to be in direct contact with us…[social media] has tremendous power, and it is significant that we have the ability to transmit our positions and to have our compatriots view our political battle…in a positive light. (Personal communication, June 12, 2014)

Karakostas also mentioned that Golden Dawn operates an online radio station, and noted the popularity of Golden Dawn's website, stating that it was within Alexa's top 50 or 60 websites in Greece, ahead of the websites of other parties (personal communication, June 12, 2014).

According to Karakostas, the impact of social media and the internet was especially positive for Golden Dawn prior to the 2012 electoral contests: "…our ideas and policies became known to a wider public, which we could not have done through our newspaper…via the internet and the reproduction of our writings by other blogs, the public found out what Golden Dawn is," noting that the party was also helped in the same manner by social and online media prior to the 2014 European parliamentary elections. Karakostas added that there was no change in Golden Dawn's internet strategy between 2012 and 2014. Regarding the elections themselves, Karakostas said that the party does not use Facebook to select candidates, stating that it was "not a popularity contest," adding that "we want to take advantage of the internet, not to be taken advantage of" (personal communication, June 12, 2014).

Golden Dawn is a party which also elicited many reactions from other individuals who were interviewed as part of this study. Vlachos described it as a "mash party," which "combines the mass party movements of the 1920s and 1930s with digital technology" (personal communication, November 26, 2013), while Adamidis noted the significant help that its network of blogs has provided it (personal communication, April 10, 2013). Koskinas characterized Golden Dawn as a "dominant" force on the Greek internet, estimating that it operates over 150 blogs (personal communication, June 6, 2013). Psara argued that Golden Dawn's online supporters "have understood more than anyone else social media and its power," with the caveat that it was not aided electorally by social media due to the older demographic which supports it, but that instead, social media has "given their views credibility" online (personal communication, November 11, 2013). Bakounakis stated that "Golden Dawn would not be a part of the public sphere if it wasn't for social media" (personal communication, March 8, 2013).

Other interviewees viewed the role of Golden Dawn's online and social media presence as being less significant or important. For Al-Saleh, it's not the medium or how effectively it is used, but the message: "It has nothing to do with how [Golden Dawn] uses social media…What matters is your message. If you try to spread a message on social media of responsibility, hope, peace, harmony, love, you've failed. If you peddle hate, social media work magnificently" (personal communication, January 11, 2014). Wherlock argued that Golden Dawn does better on Facebook than on the "very left wing" Greek Twittersphere: "I don't think Golden Dawn finds it easy to survive [on Twitter]. I think their natural home would be Facebook... it's got more reach" (personal communication, April 3, 2013), while Efimeros claimed that the Greek Twittersphere "has thrown out" most Golden Dawn supporters (personal communication, July 18, 2013).

Dimitrakopoulou, in turn, stated her belief that Golden Dawn benefited from being excluded from the mainstream media, especially before the May 2012 elections, despite their "effective" use of social media (personal communication, July 5, 2013). Vasilopoulos stated that Golden Dawn is an "exception" to ERT's rule of providing airtime to parties represented in Parliament, stating: "no airtime is made available to Golden Dawn" (personal communication, August 22, 2017). Conversely, Vasilis Papadopoulos, the president of the steering committee of the "Den Plirono" movement, expressed his view that "Golden Dawn is in large part a media creation" (personal communication, November 26, 2013).

6.5.8 – Kinima Den Plirono

Both a political party and a social movement, the "Kinima Den Plirono" ("I Don't Pay Movement") was established in 2008 initially as an activist group performing public acts of civil disobedience, such as allowing drivers to bypass highway toll booths in protest of dangerous road conditions and the high cost of tolls, and clandestinely reconnecting electricity to households whose electric service was cut off due to their inability to pay. The group was later established politically in March 2012, and it participated in the May 2012 elections.

According to Vasilis Papadopoulos, the president of the steering committee of the "Den Plirono" movement, "new media served as a catalyst" for the group, noting that when "Den Plirono" was first established, a video of the group's activism at a toll plaza posted on YouTube "was enough to make us known to hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens" (personal communication, November 26, 2013). Papadopoulos described the content of the videos posted by "Den Plirono," emphasizing video's continued significant role for the movement:

> Our activist actions are 90 percent of [the videos] we post, in particular because we believe that you are not what you claim but what you do. And because the public has

> gotten tired of lofty words all these years, they have to see what is actually happening. The actions we post, for example, include reconnecting electricity, actions at toll booths, actions at anti-fascist and anti-racist demonstrations, actions borne out of labor battles, general strikes, freeing public beaches. Whatever has to do with our constitutionally protected rights…" (Personal communication, November 26, 2013).

Papadopoulos stated that "Den Plirono" formulated a multimedia team which produces videos and other audiovisual material of a professional quality, despite a lack of resources, noting that "Den Plirono" is "rich in imagination," and emphasizing that the movement is comprised of "80 percent young people." According to Papadopoulos, social media was viewed as a significant medium for Den Plirono in light of the mainstream media's hostile stance towards it: "[t]he television stations, private and public, air us rarely if ever, because they belong to the major contractors who are our opponents. It's natural that they would want to show us only to defame us" (personal communication, November 26, 2013).

As stated by Papadopoulos, "Den Plirono" is a citizens' movement, but distinct from so-called "citizens' movements" established by political parties to expand their influence, citing such groups as "our enemies." Social media, according to Papadopoulos, serves as a protector of the movement's image in this regard. In commenting on the actions of "Den Plirono," Batzoglou cited the group as an example of a "classical citizens' movement," which successfully used its blogs to organize actions at locations such as toll plazas, and then effectively moved to other mediums, such as SMS text messaging, when its blogs began to be tracked by the authorities.

Finally, Papadopoulos added that "while we are interested in being heard within the opportunities provided to us by the system, within Parliament…it's something limited, because true change occurs outside such institutions" (personal communication, November 26, 2013).

6.5.9 – Laiki Enotita (LAE)

"Laiki Enotita" ("Popular Unity," abbreviated "LAE")[43] is a left-wing party which broke off from the governing SYRIZA party in August 2015, in opposition to SYRIZA's decision to agree to and ratify the third memorandum of austerity measures. Despite being established only one month prior to the September 2015 snap parliamentary elections, the party did participate in that electoral contest, failing, however, to enter Parliament.

According to Aris Tolios, a member of LAE's political council, the party is "trying to involve younger members…people that are actually involved in social media debates, that have strong accounts," adding that "it's not just the digital presence, but it has to be the physical, the actual presence that matters." Concerning LAE's social media presence, Tolios stated that the party is "prove our artistic and graphic presentation" while it is also attempting to "have social or political relations with the whole media space that especially after the Referendum of 2015 and the political turn of SYRIZA…are now orphaned." Tolios mentioned that LAE mostly utilizes Facebook and Twitter, while the party also used Tumblr to disseminate posters prior to the September 2015 elections. Prior to the elections, LAE also created a secondary twitter feed which, according to Tolios, was an attempt to create an "anti-memorandum counter-news network." Tolios stated that approximately 15 people are involved in LAE's social media efforts (personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Tolios noted that LAE was in the process of launching "a political campaign of informing the Greek people of our basic political views…a campaign that informs people about a true alternative strategy." Social media's role in this campaign would be "to clarify and make as simple and popular as possible our basic points." As stated by Tolios, despite being represented

[43] See http://www.laiki-enotita.gr.

in the European Parliament (via a member initially elected with SYRIZA), the mainstream media were enforcing what he described as an "intentional ban" against LAE, further necessitating a strong social media presence (personal communication, February 22, 2017).

6.5.10 – Oikologoi Prasinoi

The "Oikologoi Prasinoi" ("Ecologist Greens" or "Green Party")[44] are not a new presence within the Greek political landscape, as it has been active since 2002. The party, since the January 2015 elections, has supported SYRIZA electorally and two of its members were represented in Parliament as part of the SYRIZA coalition.

For Tasos Krommydas, social media afforded the Green Party the opportunity to be heard, stating: "we use social media in order to have access to a larger audience that we could not access through publications or through TV appearances…" The Green Party, according to Krommydas, is most active on Facebook and on Twitter, with content on the two platforms being 90 percent duplicate, while YouTube was used by the party "to a lesser extent." Notably, the Green Party also seemed to reproduce the "bulletin board"-style usage of social media of many other Greek political parties. As stated by Krommydas, "[w]e mainly use social media as a broadcasting instrument, [posting] press releases and public statements or our policy papers or our activity events." Notably though, the Green Party organized a question-and-answer session via Facebook during the May 2012 campaign period. As described by Krommydas:

> During the election period we were much more active on a daily basis on social media and we had two occasions…where we invited users of social media to post their questions and replied to them…[the] impact was only positive…but I cannot say if that positive impact was of any significance. (Personal communication, October 16, 2013)

[44] See http://www.ecogreens-gr.org.

Finally, Krommydas stated that the party would not adopt a new social media policy for the 2014 European parliamentary elections, stating that social media would be used in the same manner (personal communication, October 16, 2013).

6.5.11 – Pirate Party of Greece

The Pirate Party of Greece[45] is an ordinary member of the "Pirate Party International" and is affiliated with Pirate Parties that are active in numerous other European countries. It is a party known for its advocacy of digital rights and individual liberties. The Greek Pirate Party was established in January 2012, participating in the May and June 2012 parliamentary elections.

According to Thanasis Gounaris, a founder and member of the governing board of the Pirate Party, the party itself "was not a result of the crisis," noting that the party would have been established regardless and that efforts were underway to launch the party since 2006. It is a party which, however, "essentially began online," in the words of Gounaris. Gounaris described the party's social media and online presence as encompassing two Facebook pages and accounts on Twitter, YouTube and Google+, a website with a forum, Facebook pages for regional sections of the Pirate Party of Greece, members-only policy deliberation pages, and a Mumble platform for inter-party discussion and voting. Gounaris noted that most members and most candidates of the party maintained a social media presence (personal communication, October 8, 2013).

As described by Gounaris, as part of the party's campaign efforts for both of the electoral contests of 2012, campaign videos were developed promoting the basic positions and values of the party, which were posted on YouTube. Campaigning also took place via Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and blogs. Gounaris also mentioned a rather innovative concept, where the Athens Wireless Metropolitan Network was used to provide information about the Pirate Party in

[45] See https://www.pirateparty.gr.

exchange for providing free SSID internet access. According to Gounaris, although the party was required to maintain a physical presence in order to be registered, "our real office is the internet" (personal communication, October 8, 2013).

Gounaris also described the Pirate Party's educational wing, "Pirates in Education," which participated in nationwide elections of the Greek Teachers' Federation in 2013 and earned over 10 percent of the vote, surpassing the educational wings of parties such as PASOK and SYRIZA. According to Gounaris, the party's promotion for these elections simply consisted of a Facebook page and a Wordpress page[46] (personal communication, October 8, 2013).

In keeping with the Pirate Party's ideology, Gounaris also explained how the party incorporated digital rights and transparency into its pre-election platform in 2012. According to Gounaris, any member of parliament elected with the Pirates would not be obliged to vote according to a party or committee line. Instead, online referendums would be held, policy would be constructed in consultation with citizens, and that would be translated to the vote of each member of parliament (personal communication, October 8, 2013).

6.5.12 – To Potami

"To Potami" ("The River")[47] was established in early 2014 by prominent television and print journalist Stavros Theodorakis, who also founded *protagon.gr* and had long been a familiar face on Mega Channel. Within months of its establishment, it successfully won two seats in the European parliamentary elections of May 2014, later earning representation in the Greek Parliament in the January 2015 and September 2015 national elections.

[46] See http://www.piratetimes.net/history-in-the-making-first-ever-pirate-unionist-elected-in-athens/.
[47] See http://www.topotami.gr.

Antri Constantinou, a social media and communications volunteer with "To Potami," described the party as "the party of the internet," and as "a movement, not a party," noting that the party is entirely volunteer-run and does not have members, regional offices, or a president. Constantinou claimed that initially, To Potami had been shut out of the mass media, but "the traditional media were ultimately obliged to mention it…the buzz on the internet was so great." In Constantinou's view, "the internet was for To Potami the most essential tool upon our launch" (personal communication, November 11, 2014).

Regarding the usage of social media by To Potami, Constantinou stated that Facebook, Twitter, Google+, Instagram, YouTube, and Soundcloud were all used by the party, in addition to operating a web radio station, adding: "[w]e use Facebook and Twitter daily, and YouTube and Google+ and anything else you can imagine. Where we differ from the other parties is that we only use our own accounts," insinuating that To Potami does not engage in the practice of trolling online using fake accounts. Image is also emphasized according to Constantinou, who stated "we upload a lot of high quality photos and videos, because I believe that social media are based largely on images nowadays." In terms of interaction, Constantinou as well as Katerina Sitzani, social media and communications volunteer with To Potami, stated that the party tries to reply to everybody except troll accounts. Constantinou stated that there were four people regularly involved with the social media efforts of To Potami, in addition to others who were involved on an ad hoc basis (personal communication, November 11, 2014).

According to Constantinou, in the party's few months of existence, great strides were made in getting the parties representatives and candidates to adopt social media, stating that almost all were utilizing such tools. Constantinou added: "We are a party without money and we

try to do everything ourselves. We don't have paid advisers to manage the social media of our personnel. They manage their accounts themselves, and honestly they do a very good job."

In terms of the party's usage of social media for its pre-election campaigning in 2014, Constantinou explained:

> What social media reproduced was that which we wanted to make known since our establishment: who we are, our basic positions, that we're the third party, a party without money, without backers, a party starting from zero…Other parties were started by longtime politicians. (Personal communication, November 11, 2014)

Constantinou added that social media were also used to present the party's candidates for the 2014 elections, where the party emphasized candidates who did not have a political background (personal communication, November 11, 2014).

Regarding the stance of To Potami towards the mass media, Constantinou noted that the party's founder, Stavros Theodorakis, "has many years of experience with the traditional media and knows…how these media formulate the news," noting that many news items, even those released by the party itself, were manipulated by the media.

On the topic of volunteerism, Sitzani noted that the party "does not actively recruit, they come to us," while Constantinou added that "[w]hoever wants to find us can do so online. If there's a need for face-to-face communication, there's our coordinators…[working] from their homes and phones. If a meeting must be held, it will be at a café or their living room," hinting at Greece's prevalent café culture (personal communication, November 11, 2014).

Finally, regarding the future plans of To Potami regarding its social media presence, Constantinou stated that what the party would like to accomplish is more interactivity between the official postings of the party being shared by its volunteers, and the party sharing more of the social media content of its volunteers (personal communication, November 11, 2014).

6.6 – Other Government Bodies

6.6.1 – Government Ministries

A few notable insights can be gathered by examining the stance of government ministries towards social media, using the Ministry of National Defense as an example. According to Ioanna Iliadi, press adviser to the ministry in 2013:

> There exists a paradox. The Ministry of National Defense has not recognized the existence of social media. This should not seem peculiar to you, it's true. When the Ministry announces something, it announces it only to traditional media…sends the press release only to traditional media. However, in the press office they have set up an RSS feed and they sit and follow what the blogs are writing. They never respond or comment, they just keep abreast of what is being written. They never engage with them…They don't accredit blogs or bloggers. (Personal communication, May 26, 2013)

Regarding the website of the Defense Ministry, Iliadi described it in 2013 as a "bulletin board"—a theme which has recurred with the online presence of other political actors in Greece. Iliadi described the website as "non functional, containing only the Ministry's announcements." According to Iliadi, this was because "the staff was not trained, there were no people who ever worked with social media," adding that it is prohibited for military personnel to write on social media. Iliadi added that the Defense Ministry, like other Greek government ministries, did not engage in online dialogue with the public (personal communication, May 26, 2013).

In a 2017 interview, Katerina Tsatsaroni, press representative for Defense Minister Panos Kammenos, stated that the Ministry of National Defense works only within "official channels," even though there existed many military blogs which would reproduce the Ministry's content. Tsatsaroni added that the armed forces "cannot be politicized," and this leads to major differences in the social media strategy to be employed compared to other government ministries. Notably, Tsatsaroni mentioned that part of the Ministry's official communications

strategy is the development of a web-based series, with a male and female protagonist, that "will reflect all Greeks" while boosting the image of the national armed forces. This series would be heavily promoted via social media. (Personal communication, March 6, 2017).

6.6.2 – Local Municipalities

Yiannis Boutaris, the mayor of Thessaloniki, Greece's second largest city, has developed a reputation in Greece and abroad as being both highly innovative and outspoken.[48] Leonidas Makris, an adviser to Boutaris, described the mayor as someone who is "introducing innovative things to the Greek public sphere and Greek politics" (personal communication, July 4, 2013). Interestingly enough, however, despite Boutaris' youthful and innovative image, he was not a major presence on social media.

According to Makris, Boutaris has earned the reputation of an effective, albeit unusual, communicator, describing him as "far from being charismatic" and "extremely honest," someone who "talks spontaneously to the press and to the electronic media, which makes him different from most politicians." Makris added that Boutaris is "not very careful in a sense to construct a certain image that applies to the modern needs of the media…but this is exactly his advantage as well." In Makris' view, Boutaris "uses language that reaches the average voter well, even though this is not something cultivated from his side, there's not a structure, it's not based on a certain plan to approach the media…" (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

Despite Boutaris' effectiveness as a communicator, Makris noted that the mayor was inactive in the online sphere: "…the mayor still holds a web page that needs to be updated since the last elections [in 2010]," adding, however, that "now that we're approaching the elections of

[48] See http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/16/world/europe/thessaloniki-tackles-greeces-problems-in-miniature.html, https://www.theguardian.com/public-leaders-network/2014/dec/30/tattooed-mayor-thessaloniki-greece-yiannis-boutaris.

2014, we anticipate that it is going to be updated and is going to be used as a vehicle to communicate with the voters." Makris also stated that leading up to the 2014 municipal elections, "we might develop an account in Facebook as well, but this is again due to happen very close to the elections and not yet." In Makris's view, Boutaris' lack of a social media presence was due to his age, stating: "[h]e's 71 years old now, he's not familiar with the way they work." Makris did recognize the need for change, however: "In the future, we need and he needs to adjust and it's quite probable that he's going to develop an account in Facebook and…Twitter, or the group that is going to be appointed for this job" (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

Makris did indicate that despite Boutaris' official absence from social and online media, they did play a positive role in his election in 2010:

> Through the internet there was an extended network that was following what was happening in the political movement of Boutaris…his political movement had an extended list of e-mail accounts that were reaching up to 2,000-3,000 participants… which themselves, the participants of this list were sending to their own friends these messages. (Personal communication, July 4, 2013)

Makris also noted that Boutaris' campaign webpage in 2010 doubled as a blog:

> The webpage had the use of a kind of a blog as well. There was a committee that was dealing with the promotion of the political movement and was really publishing their views about…certain important issues of the political campaign in this website, and in some cases it was used as a blog as well, to keep the electorate updated about certain views of the mayor and the political movement. (Personal communication, July 4, 2013)

Makris noted the success of the online activity of Boutaris' associates in reaching young voters: "[t]hrough the use by his associates of certain electronic media, this can really reach young people…and the proof of this is the fact that most of young people are voters of Boutaris as well" (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

Finally, Makris noted that while blogs are treated as an unofficial medium and are unrecognized by the municipality, Boutaris "follows all the information published in the local blogs of the city, so he's informed about what they write about his policies and administration… he's informed about what social media write about him" (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

Moving on from the city of Thessaloniki to the small island of Symi, a local blog based on the island took on the role of serving as the official opposition to the local mayor, who had run unopposed. Stella Zervou, the founder of the "Symi Today" blog, explained her rationale for creating the blog in 2010, a year in which municipal elections had been held:

> The reason I started the blog was because there was no other way to express our discontent regarding our local problems, and because in the most recent municipal elections there was no opponent. A voice was needed for us to express our disagreement. That role was adopted by the blog. An opposing voice was needed and I had no other way to do this but through the blog… (Personal communication, June 3, 2013)

According to Zervou, the blog contained local news and important information for the local community such as ferry boat schedules, "anything that I believe an active citizen should know, especially his rights." She also noted that locals occasionally send in stories or photographs for possible publication. A chat feature existed on the blog as well, but Zervou stated her opposition to profanity, personal attacks, and anonymity (personal communication, June 3, 2013).

In Zervou's view, the blog "helped quite a bit, bringing into the open issues that [the local government] had concealed." This did not go unnoticed by the local authorities, according to Zervou, who said that "they waged war…when you tell the truth and do so eponymously, which is what matters most, they fight you." Despite this, Zervou noted her intention to keep the blog operating even after the 2014 municipal elections and regardless of the winner, operating in a watchdog role (personal communication, June 3, 2013).

6.7 – Social Movements of a Political Nature

6.7.1 – Introduction

Beginning on May 25, 2011 and continuing for approximately two months, the "Indignants" protest movement was inarguably the largest mass movement to occur in Greece's post-war history. Based in Syntagma Square in central Athens, the movement spread to major squares and public spaces in practically every other major city and town throughout the country. In a year where the world saw the development of the "Arab Spring" in North Africa, the movement of the "Indignados" in Spain (after which the "Indignants" of Greece borrowed their name), and the Occupy Wall Street movement in the United States and elsewhere, the movement of the "Indignants" also garnered global attention from both the media and activists.

The "Indignants" movement was not the only major social movement to take place in Greece during the period being studied, however. Another significant example is the long-standing activist movement in Skouries, an area in the Halkidiki region of northern Greece, where for years controversial gold mining operations have been underway. The opposition to the mining activities is of both an economic and environmental nature, and has garnered support from activists and solidarity movements both in Greece and internationally.

In the subsections which follow, the role of social media in inspiring these movements and the manner in which social and new media have been used by the activists and protesters participating in these movements, will be examined, as will the overall contribution of the social and new media use stemming out of these protests, on the public sphere and civil society at large in Greece during the years of the economic crisis.

6.7.2 – Movement of the "Indignants"

For Papathanasiou, the "Indignants" protests of 2011 represented a moment of rebirth for the Greek public sphere. "It had been years since the public had come out to talk with their neighbors, to discuss day-to-day issues which did not have to do with the stock market or lifestyle issues," said Papathanasiou. "2011 was an important year. In 2011, the public was given the opportunity to come out onto the squares" (personal communication, December 17, 2012).

How did it all begin, however? In the days leading up to the launch of the movement, an invitation began to circulate on Facebook, calling the Greek public down to Syntagma Square on the evening of May 25. According to Christina Papadopoulou, this invitation was the reason she decided to participate: "Facebook played a crucial role. The invitation originated from there. That's how I saw it and decided to go. I would not have gone otherwise" (personal communication, February 2, 2014). Vazouras, however, viewed the Facebook invitation with suspicion. Noting that the Facebook invitation was supposedly the product of one or more young people, aged approximately 18-21, Vazouras expressed his opinion that the invitation:

> …contained a rhetoric that was very polished, very cultivated, very revolutionary, and I felt that behind this amazing rhetoric, this amazing text that I read, there's no way young people are involved. It was definitely people who are guiding, quote unquote "teachers." (Personal communication, May 31, 2013)

A hint may be provided by Alcestis Baboussi and Dimitris Yalourakis, who stated that they were both members of the social media team of the "Indignants." According to Baboussi, "we developed the social media presence along with some other kids," to which Yalourakis added: "the whole [social media] tree was developed by three people." This included the official Facebook page, "Indignants at Syntagma," which according to Yalourakis had reached 167,000

likes. Yalourakis stated: "[w]e took it down, there was no further need for it, the square was dispersed" (personal communication, December 15, 2012).

Nevertheless, whatever the origins of the Facebook invite and the initial call for citizens to come out and protest, the "Indignants" movement took off. Interestingly enough, another meme which is said to have circulated on Facebook at this time and which has been credited with encouraging the public to come out, may itself have been "fake news." As Heimonas notes: "The 'Indignants' movement began via a fake news story which circulated on the internet, that the Spanish [Indignados] had supposedly raised a banner which read 'shhh, don't wake the Greeks,' which never actually existed" (personal communication, February 15, 2013).

Social media played a preeminent role in the operation of the protest movement within Syntagma Square. As noted by Tsimitakis, "Every other night there was a public assembly which was broadcast live online, so everybody could see what was being discussed. There were two websites. There was a very active Facebook account" (personal communication, February 13, 2013). Broumas shares his own perspective on how the movement developed, and how, aside from the aforesaid "fake news," it was influenced by the "Indignados" and other movements:

> The internet helped to bring the Arab Spring, the Spanish Indignados experiences to Greece. The whole thing happened when some people spontaneously, on the internet, made an appointment in Monastiraki [a central Athens neighborhood] and there were also many Spanish people among them, many of them came also from here, from this social center [Nosotros], and they believed in direct democracy. And these people decided that, okay, we assembled here but from tomorrow, we will go to Syntagma and stay there with tents and call for everybody to come. Then the movement of the Indignados of Greece started, it became massive, there was a general assembly taking place in Syntagma Square which was taking decisions and actually, the general assemblies spread in every part of Greece. (Personal communication, July 3, 2013)

Panagopoulos, however, argues that the manner in which the protests developed and the way in which social media utilized, mimicked what the "Indignados" of Spain were doing: "[t]heir early

operations were mimetic. We did whatever the Spanish 'Indignados' did. And because we did whatever the Spaniards did, it wasn't authentic" (personal communication, May 31, 2013).

For Lardikou, however, social media "was the purest form of knowing what is going on," and served as an important informational and coordinating tool for participants: "they [announced] the gatherings…every moment where to go, where not to go, when something dodgy was going on, and so it helped for your safety just to know what was going on" (personal communication, February 20, 2013). Similarly, for Konstantopoulou, social media played an important but secondary role in the movement:

> The [protests] demonstrated a very clear change in the cultural attitude of Greeks. Via social media there was more communication. Instead of 25 people speaking, 1,000 people could communicate and gather and inform one another about what was happening at Syntagma Square…for what supplies might be needed at the square's medical center, at what intersection the cops were waiting…The social media weren't the impetus for the public to arrive, but they were a tool. (Personal communication, February 15, 2013)

The epicenter of the media and communications activity of the "Indignants" movement was the square's Media Center, which consisted of a multimedia team and a communications team According to Kanellopoulou, the Media Center was borne out of the early confusion of the first few days of the protests, noting that:

> …some people who had some organizational skills, through some leftist parties or student organizations, they tried to [organize an] assembly over these 500,000 people. Of course one has to understand that not all could participate in the assembly, but after some days and some occasions, we managed to have an assembly of about 2,000-3,000 people. This was already too much to handle, and there was a whole substructure [created] in order to service the General Assembly. There were a lot of groups. One of them was a communication group, multimedia team…[Texts approved by the] General Assembly, were transferred to the rest of the population through the social media and our site. There was a basic site, let's just say, the voice of the assembly of Syntagma Square and, in a way, the voice of the movement…It was very important, because it spread out to the squares of the other cities…It was the central referral point [for the movements in the other cities]. (Personal communication, October 3, 2013)

Kanellopoulou further noted that anyone who was not a member of the communications team could not enter material onto the website without approval of the General Assembly. The strong social media presence was maintained as well, according to Kanellopoulou: "The movement had the site, but also the Facebook group…Twitter not so much, and the multimedia site…which was actually all the audiovisual material that was produced in the square" (personal communication, October 3, 2013). Hrisos further described the role and impact of the Media Center:

> The General Assembly…made an early decision about not letting the mainstream media film the square's activities, because people believed that mainstream media in Greece are corrupt, so they didn't want them to tell our story through their own disruptive lens. That's why the multimedia team was created. Social media was used to tell the story to people that were not present at the square, and also to other cities all around Greece, and also to cities all around the world actually, because during those days we had many solidarity activities from many countries, from Spain, even from Turkey and other places. We used the social media to communicate with these groups and people. They helped us form a network. Eventually this network developed into something that is still active through e-mailing groups and lists. (Personal communication, July 2, 2013)

Tolios was also a member of the Media Center and details his experience, noting that it was the first time that he used Twitter:

> I was then a member of the self-organized Media Center…The movement had three milestones: The 15th of June 2011, and the 28th and 29th of June 2011. On the 15th there was a great strike which had to be covered by us…in several spots in the city. I can remember sitting in a café using wi-fi and tweeting what was going on in the center of Athens, and of course the [tear gas] and the police brutality and so on. It was the first time in my life that I used Twitter myself, and I could see from then how powerful one piece of relevant information, how one relevant photo could become so powerful and could shape public opinion. There were some really strong images, for example, of policemen beating up bloody, unarmed protestors. Now, you have this image and it is really strong. Normally, you would not expect it to be reproduced by traditional media. We didn't expect it, because traditional media were all on the side of the government and the memorandum, but it didn't matter because we could reach [millions of] people at the speed of a second. And it was like, what we say, an image is like 1,000 words. It spoke for itself. I can remember that we really, as parts of the movement, we didn't have much to write. What was important was to cover, either live or by a photo or video, what was going on in downtown Athens. (Personal communication, February 22, 2017)

Tolios noted that the Media Center was aided by individuals with prior experience as journalists:

> We had a lot of journalists…and activists that were really experienced, trying to create a network, especially with foreign media…[I]n the first days, we were trying to set up a very standard practice of media correspondence and media communication. Then when the great workers' strikes and the great social mobilization took place…we were trying to set up media points in all across Athens, because…the center of Greece was blocked by police. At the same time that there was an effort to…penetrate the police [roadblock] and go into the square and protest in front of Parliament, there had to be a lot of people that were covering it with photos and tweets and Facebook posts and so on. So, this was second, to actually set up a social media network that could cover what was going on in the city. I think that this became pretty much the greatest bet that we had to achieve…to create an anti-news network. (Personal communication, February 22, 2017)

The "Indignants" movement was also significant for the initiatives which were themselves borne out of the activities within Syntagma Square. The mindthecam media initiative, for instance, was, according to Hrisos, "created…right after the Syntagma Square movement...in September 2011," (personal communication, July 2, 2013), while Kanellopoulou noted that several members of the multimedia and communications teams founded mindthecam "because we didn't really want to say that there was no square anymore…It just felt like the right thing to do, to keep posting things in the blog, to keep it alive" (personal communication, October 3, 2013).

Another media initiative borne out of the square was the #rbnews hashtag employed and promoted by Radiobubble. Though the hashtag was originally used during the December 2008 riots, Papathanasiou described how it helped Radiobubble develop its foreign language service:

> Radiobubble brought together many people from Spain who were retweeting news which pertained to Syntagma Square. As with everything else at Radiobubble, it wasn't planned but it happened. People at Syntagma who found, via #rbnews, a space to communicate what was happening and to come in contact with other people at the square, ended up in Radiobubble's physical space…at some point later that year, Dora [Oikonomides] showed up to Radiobubble one day and said "I'm here." She was the basis for the development of…Radiobubble International…a radio program and Twitter [postings] and even a publication. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Papathanasiou also described the linkages which were formed with other activists:

> We came into contact with the communications team of the square…some of its members came [to Radiobubble], some joined the Radiobubble team, some others who did not join us continued to collaborate with us on social issues. For example, the material we collected on Skouries…was obtained from people who had gone there and who were present at Syntagma Square… (Personal communication, June 27, 2017)

Indicating social media's vast reach during the protests, Kounenakis stated that #rbnews was the most popular Twitter hashtag in Greece in 2011 (personal communication, June 13, 2017).

Christina Papadopoulou, whose description of how the Time Bank of Athens and Syntagma Square also stemmed out of the "Indignants" protest movement appeared in chapter 5, noted that the Time Bank's implementations of direct democracy procedures was directly influenced by the movement, as well as the formation of other new initiatives:

> The concept of non-violent communication, non-violent resistance developed at the square, so for me what happened there is extremely significant. And as a result, the Time Bank was born and other teams as well, such as the Festival for Solidarity & Cooperative Economy, which did not exist. We are speaking again of an initiative without money, yet you see everything working so well and people learning things, getting involved, and it's really nice to see this happening. (Personal communication, February 2, 2014)

Other initiatives, movements, and political parties borne out of the "Indignants" protest movement have been detailed in earlier chapters, including the Metropolitan Community Clinic of Ellinikon, Save Greek Water, Tutorpool, and the United People's Front (EPAM).

Some interviewees, however, argued against the significance of social media in the formation of the protest. As stated by Mandravelis: "I'm still wondering who began [the movement], because supposedly it started through social media. But what I know is that if a young person was so successful on social media, he'd announce it everywhere" (personal communication, June 11, 2013). Skarpelos argues that the true significance of the movement arises not from the usage of social media, but from what tangibly occurred at the square:

> Surely many of the people who participated in these movements were young and had a connection to social media…and knew how to use them as a mobilization tool and wished to do so. And at specific times when it was necessary to quickly mobilize people, they were successful. Yet, I believe that their role was not as important as ascribed…The true essence was found in real life, in the real meetings in the squares, where there were islands of participatory democratic procedures, albeit for a short time. Regardless of what mobilized participants to come out for the first time, to repeat it or to remain in the square was primarily the result of these procedures. (Personal communication, May 29, 2013)

In Katrougalos' view, social media's impact "…was spectacular in the beginning and very weak afterwards. They triggered the initial presence of the Indignants in Syntagma Square, but after that they played more a role of critique than a role of assembling people" (personal communication, July 2, 2013). Gazi also expressed her doubts: "The 'Indignants' movement theoretically began out of social media, theoretically Greeks came out…when that news from Spain circulated…and supposedly that's how the self-organization of Syntagma began, which was a bubble" (personal communication, January 11, 2013).

Dimitrakopoulou noted the ephemerality of the movement and questioned its impact:

> In Greece we have clusters of people who get together…act as dynamic pressure groups, but I think we are lacking in turning this dynamic, into pursuing a specific goal. I mean, for example, the movement of the "Indignants," it was there for almost two months, it was very active, a lot of people from very different political backgrounds participated there, and after that, the movement dissolved. Where are the "Indignants" now? Did things get any better and we didn't realize that? So, I think that we are lacking in turning this reaction into a specific action" (Personal communication, July 5, 2013)

For Tolios, "this movement could have gone on if it had political aims," (personal communication, February 22, 2017), while Masouras was blunter with his assessment: "[t]o be frank, the Indignant movement didn't manage to stave off austerity. They weren't effective in enacting legislation, in getting dirty politicians out of power. They weren't effective in changing the status quo in Brussels" (personal communication, February 23, 2013).

Broumas, however, sees the "Indignants" movement as having had two substantial impacts: "[t]he first was that it further delegitimized the system, and the second was that it gave people the thought that they had the power in their hands and they could reimagine again what kind of society they would like" (personal communication, July 3, 2013), while Efimeros' in view, "it's often said that the 'Indignants' haven't accomplished anything because they died out. In reality, three governments changed…the system was forced into bringing in its backups, Papademos, [former interim Prime Minister] Pikramenos…the political system was rattled" (personal communication, July 18, 2013).

6.7.3 – The Skouries Activist Movement

In a picturesque and rural forested area in the Halkidiki prefecture of northern Greece is the region of Skouries, where for several years, a protracted activist movement has been in progress, protesting controversial gold mining activities in a privatized tract of land which was turned over to Canadian mining conglomerate Eldorado Gold and its Greek subsidiary, Hellas Gold, owned by Giorgos Bobolas, for a long time a shareholder in Mega Channel and other major mainstream media outlets. The opposition to the gold mining activities is primarily on environmental grounds, as it is occurring in an area of virgin old-growth forest and has put the surrounding region, sea, and water table at risk of contamination. Opposition also arises based on economic arguments that the Greek State's agreement with Eldorado Gold and Hellas Gold is not beneficial to public coffers. Two activist groups are leading the Skouries movement, Antigold Greece and SOS Halkidiki, whose activities and usage of social media will be presented.

Maria Kadoglou, founder of Antigold Greece, has been participating in the anti-mining cause since 1997, initially against a different company, TVX, which was mining in the area.

According to her, she started her first activist website in 1999 with little impact, and launched her current blog[49] in 2008 which received a minimal amount of visitors until the Skouries issue became widely known in early 2013. This blog contains news not just from Skouries, but other similar cases throughout the country and the world. Kadoglou notes that "we don't want to be a populist blog, we try to maintain standards, to rebut arguments with scientific evidence…" while adding that "we have no business engaging in dialogue with private investors. Our dialogue is with the Greek State" (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

Regarding Antigold's online presence, Kadoglou states that two individuals actively work on the organization's social media accounts, the group is active on Facebook and Twitter, where updates and stories which don't get published on the main blog are also posted, as well as photos, as well as retweets and shares of stories pertaining to mining activity from around the world. Twitter, in particular, was singled out by Kadoglou for its influence: "Twitter, especially, has greatly helped in the immediate dissemination of information, such as last August [2012] when riot police invaded Ierissos [town near Skouries] without cause or reason. I posted two words on Twitter and within minutes it was chaos." Kadoglou highlighted another incident, an arson attack at Skouries, as the spark which finally attracted mainstream attention to Skouries, on the part of mainstream media and activists from outside the region:

> Response increased dramatically…after the arson attack in Skouries. Until then there was total silence by the media and the internet. No one covered us, we would organize demonstrations with thousands of participants and nothing would be heard. Everything changed when they could hide it no longer hide the issue. From that point forward there has been a tremendous amount of support for the cause from all over Greece, the public is very interactive on the blog, Twitter, and Facebook, whereas in the past the blog was not very well known. (Personal communication, July 4, 2013)

[49] See https://www.antigoldgr.org.

Kadoglou notes that online outlet Omnia TV (to be introduced in chapter 7) and Radiobubble were the first outlets to draw attention to the cause, along with social media, while many foreign journalists learned about Skouries via the Antigold blog. Kadoglou further stated that her group began blogging in English 3-4 times per week, in addition to posting English-language videos, in order to internationalize the issue. Kadoglou added that the organization disseminates videos as well, but only video recorded by other individuals. (Personal communication, July 4, 2013).

According to Kadoglou, response was swift from the political system: "[e]specially on Twitter, with those two superstars Adonis Georgiadis and Giorgos Mouroutis. Nothing more need be said. They've taken on the responsibility of supporting the investment, writing nonsense to which I don't respond…The most you can do is embarrass them." Kadoglou also described a sharp division within the local community, including an incident where a local Facebook page supporting the mining activities pictured Antigold members under a banner reading "traitors." Kadoglou further noted an incident where Hellas Gold's Facebook page was exposed for having 10,000 fake likes from Russian accounts. According to Kadoglou, after the issue went viral on Facebook, the fake likes were removed (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

Environmentalist Mary Christianou is a volunteer with the region's other activist organization, SOS Halkidiki,[50] administering the organization's blog and social media accounts. She stated that she had been actively participating in the cause since early 2012 and that she worked professionally for Katerina Igglezi, a member of parliament with SYRIZA.

Christianou explained the reasons SOS Halkidiki was founded: "The media, especially the Greek media, didn't pay any attention at all, so we were kind of silenced. We really needed to get the message out and inform people and tell them about both this social movement, but also

[50] See https://soshalkidiki.wordpress.com.

the scientific facts." While SOS Halkidiki maintained an active Facebook and Twitter presence, Christianou said that the blog was the most important medium in the organization's view, noting also the difficulties with operating it:

> The blog is more official than Facebook and Twitter. Twitter, we usually use it for fast transfer of information, like "two people were arrested, please help because this happened," and we also use it for informing that there is a new post on the blog. What is uploaded on the blog is a bit of a difficult process, because it is supposed to represent an organization of many people coming from different political and philosophical standpoints.…The other thing is that we have to cross-reference our information. We never upload something that we are not sure of…We compromise on the speed to have more accurate information. (Personal communication, July 6, 2013)

In addition, SOS Halkidiki also publishes an e-magazine and also heavily uses YouTube to post videos. Foreign language content was also produced and published by SOS Halkidiki. In all, four people were actively involved with the organization's blog and social media accounts, plus four more individuals who were active on occasion. Christianou stated that SOS Halkidiki was launched with the participation of 30-40 people, that an average of 100-150 people attend its local assemblies, and that committees have been established in each village in the region (personal communication, July 6, 2013).

Similarly to Kadoglou, Christianou noted significant variations in the amount of visitors the blog received, depending on local developments, citing an average of 2,000 visitors per day and spikes when "something big happens." For instance, the blog had 10,000 visitors in a three-day period when riot police invaded Ierissos. Christianou expressed her belief that SOS Halkidiki "needs to somehow find a way to…attract more permanent readers." Regarding the attention afforded to the issue by the mainstream media, Christianou said that the lack of coverage:

> …was on purpose. They were directed. Maybe they had orders not to bring it up. In this situation following the crisis, they don't want to bring this issue that is connected to what is happening to the country, selling out natural resources, destroying the environment.

> They are very delicate issues the mainstream media don't want to inform people about. It's on purpose. (Personal communication, July 6, 2013)

When, according to Christianou, the issue could no longer be concealed, "...the mainstream media tried to twist the message and presented it as we are the terrorists or we are completely uneducated and don't want development. But because the [issue] became known… we got into the game through internet and social media." Additionally, through these online efforts, as stated by Christianou, the issue became known in Canada (where Eldorado Gold is based) and drew the attention of activists there, including Naomi Klein (personal communication, July 6, 2013).

According to Panagopoulos, "No one in Greece would have learned what was happening in Skouries without social media…it's been going on for years and the public just found out now" (personal communication, May 31, 2013), while Wherlock noted that through the activists' efforts on social media, the issue drew attention outside of the Skouries region, with many activists involved with the Skouries issue being based in Athens (personal communication, April 3, 2013). Drot noted that #skouries had trended second in the world on Twitter earlier in 2013, and that through the coverage he provided to the issue on his own site, *okeanews.gr*, the issue became known in France, leading to a journalist from *Le Monde* reporting on the story (personal communication, May 24, 2013). Conversely, Tachiaou cited Skouries as an example that has been magnified on social media: "There was a demonstration yesterday. I was there and there were very few people. If you look at Facebook and Twitter…everybody is against this investment…there were not more than 1,500-2,000 people. Facebook and Twitter…are not very representative…they magnify" (personal communication, February 23, 2013).

6.8 – SURVEY: VIEWS ON SOCIAL MEDIA'S IMPACT ON POLITICAL AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

The results of the electronic survey questionnaire provide a wealth of insights relating to the views of the respondents in the three populations sampled—editors of major Greek newspapers, Greek members of the European Parliament, and representatives of civil society and citizens' organizations—on the potential impact of social and new media on politics, political movements, activism, and social movements in Greece during the period studied.

The political preference of respondents, with regard to the party they voted for in the 2014 European parliamentary elections, was greatly divided, with a plurality expressing their support for SYRIZA, with the next highest parties (New Democracy, Golden Dawn, and the KKE) far behind, though over a fifth of respondents did not provide an answer. A more even split was observed when respondents were asked about their party preference for the 2014 local and municipal elections, with SYRIZA ranking first (with less than a fifth of respondents), followed by PASOK (running as "Elia"), Golden Dawn and independent candidates, and over a quarter of respondents not providing a response at all. Going back to the 2009 European parliamentary elections as a point of comparison, SYRIZA again finished first in terms of support amongst respondents, followed by New Democracy and PASOK. For the 2010 local and municipal elections, SYRIZA was again first in terms of support but at low levels (less than one-sixth of the sample) and over a quarter of respondents not answering. For the national parliamentary elections of May 2012, SYRIZA was first amongst respondents with a plurality and was trailed significantly by PASOK-Elia and Golden Dawn, while once again, over a quarter of the sample did not reply. There was a slight shift in terms of preference for the June 2012 parliamentary elections, with SYRIZA's support declining but still remaining first, followed by

New Democracy, PASOK-Elia and Golden Dawn, and over a quarter of participants not responding. The results of the prior six questions showed a marked preference amongst newspapers for "mainstream" left-wing parties, while representatives of civil society organizations generally preferred parties further to the left of the political spectrum.

Regarding politics and media bias, an overwhelming majority of respondents—particularly newspaper editors—agreed that the mainstream media in Greece are biased against certain political parties. Here, a much smaller of members of the European Parliament, but nevertheless a majority of such respondents, agreed. A clear majority of the sample felt that the mainstream media demonstrated a bias in favor of New Democracy, PASOK-Elia, and To Potami in that order, while on the contrary, a plurality of the sample (and a particularly low percentage of elected officials) believed that there was a mainstream media bias against SYRIZA, followed by Golden Dawn and the Independent Greeks. Furthermore, SYRIZA was overwhelmingly cited as the party which was believed to enjoy the most support amongst social media users in Greece, followed far behind by Golden Dawn and To Potami. Interestingly, despite a reputation as being "the party of Facebook," only approximately one-sixth of respondents named the Independent Greeks as being the party with the most social media support. Overall, almost two-thirds of respondents, and an overwhelming majority of newspaper editors polled, agreed that the discourse which takes place on social media is biased against specific political parties. Notably here, almost half of elected officials answered "no" compared to less than one-sixth of the overall sample. New Democracy was cited as the party which was believed to have experienced the biggest decline in support as a result of the coverage it received on social and new media, followed closely behind by PASOK-Elia, mirroring the electoral

decline of the two previously incumbent parties in Greek politics. On the other hand, a small plurality of respondents felt that Facebook and Twitter users were biased towards SYRIZA, while notably, the Independent Greeks barely registered despite its social media reputation.

On the topic of perceptions regarding the way in which politicians and political parties in Greece used social and new media, the extent to which social media tools were implemented by politicians and parties in their daily operations was viewed as fairly significant by respondents, with scores relatively even across all three sample populations. Facebook was cited as the most commonly-used social media platform for politicians, followed closely by Twitter. Regarding the influence of social and new media on the quality of governance in Greece, respondents displayed near-neutrality in terms of significance of impact. Furthermore, social media's impact on the quality of governance was viewed as slightly negative in terms of influence, with members of the European Parliament again providing the highest (and only slightly positive) score, while newspaper editors provided viewed the impact of social media on quality of governance as fairly negative.

On the issue of social and new media's impact on government transparency, a slightly positive impact on transparency was ascertained by respondents, with members of the European Parliament and newspaper editors providing the most positive outlooks on both accounts. Regarding the positive or negative impact of social and new media on the transparency of political parties, respondents were almost neutral overall, with members of the European Parliament providing the most positive outlook and representatives of civil society groups providing the most negative. On whether social and new media were influential in terms of the

outcome of the parliamentary elections of 2012, a slightly significant outcome was found, with members of the European Parliament most strongly agreeing.

Regarding which party or parties were believed to have benefited the most from social and new media, SYRIZA was overwhelmingly the top choice, followed far behind by To Potami, Golden Dawn, and the Independent Greeks. Specifically looking at the parliamentary elections of May 2012, SYRIZA was cited as the party which benefited the most from social and new media, with almost half of overall respondents and almost three-fourths of elected officials sharing this view. SYRIZA was followed by Golden Dawn, New Democracy, and the Independent Greeks. Results were almost exactly the same among respondents with regard to the June 2012 parliamentary elections. KKE, mirroring the commonly-held sentiment that the party was technophobic, was widely cited as the party which benefited the least from social and new media, followed by the two previously incumbent parties, New Democracy and PASOK-Elia. KKE was also cited as the party which benefited the least from social and new media prior to the May 2012 elections and again prior to the June 2012 elections. SYRIZA was overwhelmingly noted as the party which, overall, makes the most effective use of social media in its operations, followed far behind by To Potami and Golden Dawn. Among parties that were believed to make the least effective use of social and new media, New Democracy was first, followed by the KKE.

An almost even split was found between those who believed the outcome of the 2012 parliamentary elections would have been different if not for the influence of social and new media, with a small plurality answering "yes" or "probably yes." The effectiveness of candidates' overall implementation of social and new media in their campaigns for the 2012 parliamentary elections was viewed as neutral, while the effectiveness of the usage of social

media tools by candidates and political parties participating in the 2014 was viewed as having improved, with a slightly positive score overall. The highest assessment was provided by members of the European Parliament and the lowest by newspaper editors, who nevertheless viewed the effectiveness as slightly positive. A slightly lower—and slightly positive—evaluation regarding the effectiveness of social media use by candidates and parties in the 2014 local and municipal elections was provided by respondents, with newspaper editors providing the most negative outlook, and representatives of civil society organizations the most positive.

Overall, respondents agreed to a significant extent that the internet, social media, and new media provided the public the opportunity to learn more about candidates in the 2014 elections in Greece, as compared to years past, with representatives of civil society groups and members of the European Parliament providing an extremely positive outlook on this account. On social and new media's impact upon the quality and level of campaigning for the 2014 European parliamentary elections, the three populations agreed that there was indeed impact, while the social and new media's impact on the quality of campaigning was just above neutral, with the highest score provided by civil society representatives. Looking at the local and municipal elections in 2014, social and new media's significance upon the quality and level of campaigning was neutral, while the impact of social and new media on the quality of campaigning for these elections was determined to be slightly negative, with newspaper editors providing the most negative view, and representatives of civil society the only positive view on this measure.

Regarding the impact of social and new media on the transparency maintained by the parties and candidates participating in the 2014 European parliamentary elections, the survey results illustrated that these media did favorably affect transparency, with the highest assessment

coming from members of the European Parliament. The quality of impact was found to also be slightly positive, with members of the European Parliament again providing the highest evaluation. Looking at transparency and social media's impact in the 2014 local and municipal elections, a slightly higher rating was found for local elections compared to the European elections, with members of the European Parliament again providing the highest ranking.

Regarding the political party or parties which were felt to have benefited the most from social and new media in the 2014 European parliamentary elections, SYRIZA was overwhelmingly first, followed by To Potami and Golden Dawn, while the Independent Greeks, the purported "party of Facebook," were barely measured. For that year's local and municipal elections, SYRIZA was also overwhelmingly first, trailed by New Democracy and Golden Dawn. In terms of the one party which was believed to have benefited the most from social and new media in the European parliamentary elections, a plurality chose SYRIZA, followed significantly behind by Golden Dawn. Once again, the Independent Greeks were barely measured. Concerning the party which was felt to have been hurt the most by social and new media in the 2014 European parliamentary elections, a plurality selected New Democracy, followed by the "technophobic" KKE, and PASOK-Elia. Identical results were recorded for the 2014 local and municipal elections.

When asked whether they believed social and new media impacted the final outcome of the 2014 European parliamentary elections, a plurality of respondents answered "yes" or "probably yes." Regarding that year's local and municipal elections, however, a tie was recorded between those who answered "yes" or "probably yes" and those who responded "no" or "probably no," though the single most popular response was "probably no." A majority felt that

the usage of social and new media tools increased in the electoral contests of 2014 as compared to the 2012 parliamentary elections, while none of the respondents answered "no."

In the section of the survey questionnaire made available only to members of the European Parliament, an overwhelming majority stated that they maintained official social media accounts as part of their elected position, with Facebook being by far the most popularly used social medium, followed by Twitter and YouTube. Facebook was also the social medium most utilized during the 2014 electoral campaign, and also the social medium most widely used as part of the elected officials' political duties.

Overall, the impact of social and new media on the candidates' campaigns was viewed as fairly significant, with no elected official providing a negative response. Social media was also evaluated as having a fairly positive impact upon the elected officials' jobs. A plurality of the respondents stated that they spent 1-2 hours per day on average for the maintenance of their online presence and social media accounts, while a small majority of the elected representatives stated that they planned to increase their usage of social and new media tools in the next electoral contest that they participate in.

Interestingly, almost half of the elected representatives did not provide an answer when asked whether they personally wrote and posted on their social media accounts or had a staffer or adviser for this purpose. A wide majority of the elected representatives stated that they interacted with voters and the general public via social media, and an equal percentage felt that social media aided them in their ability to communicate with their constituents and the general public. The elected representatives were entirely neutral when asked whether the feedback they received

from the public via the internet and social media impacted their positions or their political work, though the responses provided leaned negative.

In evaluating the specific ways in which the elected representatives used social and new media, the most popular ways in which these mediums were used were: answering messages from constituents, publicizing news about themselves and their political activity, and publicizing articles that they have written. These were followed by the publicizing of press releases, responding to comments or tweets on social media, political commentary, and posting multimedia. One step down from the above was the utilization of social and new media for the purposes of distributing a newsletter or communicating with other members of the European Parliament. Below this, just less than half of respondents answered that they utilize social and new media to communicate with other members from the same party, to communicate with journalists, to repost or share news about their political party, to follow other politicians' social media accounts, to follow other parties' social media accounts, or to post non-political content about themselves. Just over a quarter of respondents stated that they used social and new media to communicate with European Union officials, to communicate with international officials, to republish articles from other sources, or to follow the social media accounts of journalists or media outlets.

Trolling was identified as a problem impacting the quality of online political discourse in Greece by a large majority of elected officials, with its prevalence ranked as slightly significant and its impact on the quality of online discourse ranked as significantly negative.

Out of the elected representatives, a wide majority stated that their party maintained an official social media presence, with Facebook, Twitter and YouTube equally chosen as the most

preferred social mediums, followed closely by blogs. Furthermore, Facebook and blogs were equally cited as the single most used social media platform by the elected representatives' political parties. Out of the respondents, an overwhelming majority stated that their political party had utilized social media for electoral campaigning in 2014, with Facebook cited as the most commonly used social medium. Notably, almost half of the elected representatives declined to respond when asked whether their party maintained an official social media policy. A large majority of elected officials stated their belief that their party more heavily emphasized social media for the purposes of campaigning in the 2014 elections, as compared to the 2012 parliamentary elections.

Specifically looking at the 2014 European parliamentary elections, the significance of social media's impact on the campaign efforts of their political party was viewed with an increased level of significance, while the quality of social media's impact also increased, to a fairly positive score. Looking ahead, the elected officials felt that social and new media would play a significant role in Greece's political landscape in the upcoming years, while their expectations as to the quality of this impact were somewhat positive.

Finally, returning all 23 responses and examining the impact of social and new media upon social movements, respondents felt the role of social and new media in inspiring protests movements in Greece in recent years was fairly significant, with results similar across the three populations. They also believed there was an important role ascribed to the role of social and new media in inspiring the "Indignants" protest movement in 2011, with representatives of civil society organizations—likely the most connected to social movements—providing the highest score. Significantly a majority of respondents answered "no" or "probably no" when asked

whether they believed if a movement such as that of the "Indignants" would have been possible without the influence of social and new media, while only approximately one quarter of respondents answered "yes" or "probably yes."

Overall, what can be observed from the preceding survey results is a general view that SYRIZA is the political party which was most helped by social and new media, followed to a lesser extent by To Potami, while the parties that were generally viewed as having been helped the least by social and new media were the KKE, New Democracy, and PASOK-Elia. The Independent Greeks, with a reputation as the "party of Facebook," were not identified as having been particularly assisted by social media or particularly effective as a party in utilizing such tools. Optimism towards social and new media and their impact on transparency in government and the political sphere was modest, was the impact of social and new media upon political campaigning, although an upward trend was noticed between 2010, 2012, and 2014. Their impact was also viewed as being more significant and positive overall for candidates running in the European parliamentary elections, as compared to local and municipal races. The primacy of Facebook for political use was noted, especially amongst elected representatives, as was an increasing trend towards social media use by members of the European Parliament. Finally, the significant impact of social media on the development of social movements and protests in Greece in recent years was demonstrated by the survey results.

6.9 – DISCUSSION

The general consensus amongst interviewees was that social and new media had impacted politics to some degree in Greece, though the extent to which such tools had played a role in altering the political landscape was up for debate. Likewise, social and new media were

recognized as having had some influence upon social movements, though again, the full extent to which such tools had influenced protests and activism in Greece was debatable.

For Oikonomou, the role of social and new media in the public dialogue became more prominent in Greece concurrently with the collapse of the post-dictatorship two-party system, a development which is "not unrelated" in his view (personal communication, April 10, 2013). In the view of Panagopoulos, social and new media had not impacted the political landscape per se, but he noted three impacts on politics more broadly: exposure (where politicians are exposed to commenting and feedback), memory (where their words—and gaffes—remain online after the fact), and campaigning (as it has shifted online due to a lack of financial resources during the economic crisis) (personal communication, May 31, 2013). Broumas argues that:

> …nobody right now in Greece, no power, any kind of power, economic, political, can ignore the power of social media. If something starts getting viral…it cannot be ignored. Immediately they have to answer. I believe that the old parties don't have a specific model, they are trying to find models. (Personal communication, July 3, 2013)

Similarly, for Karamanolis, the use of social and new media as a "bulletin board" by politicians had been prevalent until around 2011 or 2012, but he observed a "paradigm shift" where politicians could "no longer ignore" social media, noting its agenda-setting role: "…the political agenda is altered by the internet and the organized participation of the public and their expression of dissatisfaction or some opinion as to what direction things should head towards" (personal communication, October 19, 2013).

For Andritsos, social media have helped place politicians in Greece under public scrutiny for the first time, stating: "[t]here is a problem with accountability in Greece...[social media] place the politician under a form of social oversight and accountability" (personal communication, April 12, 2013), while Hrisos notes that "because this dialogue is public,

[politicians] are kind of obliged to respond. If they don't respond, then they form a bad profile" (personal communication, July 2, 2013)

For Adamidis, social media now play a prime agenda-setting role in the news cycle: "a politician may give…a very interesting interview on a television program. If this interview is not reproduced on social media…few people will notice. But even a mundane interview, if reproduced on social media, creates a new cycle of publicity" (personal communication, April 10, 2013). Boubouka adds that "a substantial portion of public dialogue has moved to social media…Whereas you used to await the intervention of a politician or party in the evening news, this has shifted to their Twitter accounts in the morning" (personal communication, May 31, 2013), while Niflis notes that many politicians "now send press releases to online media first before sending them to traditional media" (personal communication, December 18, 2012). Similarly, Konstantinopoulos notes that the political system has been transformed because anything a politician tweets becomes news, adding that politicians no longer have a need to "call journalists or grant an exclusive interview" (personal communication, September 3, 2014).

Contogeorgis argues that governments "…have lost the advantage of controlling and disseminating information. They've lost the communications monopoly" (personal communication, December 19, 2016), while according to Vasilopoulos, many politicians prefer Twitter and Facebook [in order to] bypass journalists and uncomfortable questions in order to present what they want (personal communication, June 5, 2013). In Tzimeros' view, "[political] communication is no longer unidirectional, you can learn and grasp the pulse of the public" (personal communication, June 5, 2013). Kanellopoulou feels that social and new media "have not really played an important role…to really create from zero something really new. But they

have played a really important role of discrediting the status quo" (personal communication, October 3, 2013), while Karvounopoulos describes a political landscape that is "in shock" because "…politicians were not accustomed to hearing from citizens and to often be humiliated by one message while being unable to respond" (personal communication, June 28, 2013). Vlachos argues that social and new media have enabled political parties to target "specialized demographics" (personal communication, November 26, 2013), which may relate to the view of Valios Roupis, social media manager at *enikos.gr,* who argues that the mass political rallies of the past are now dead in the social media era (personal communication, April 12, 2013).

Dimitrakopoulou argues that social media have been instrumentalized by politicians:

> …as a new tool for getting votes. There is no new media strategy on behalf of the politicians. There are very few cases who actually have a group of experienced people who understand how new media work and use this media in favor of enriching the relation of the politician with the citizenry. (Personal communication, July 5, 2013)

In turn, Andriotakis adds that the use of social and new media by politicians "is shallow and without understanding…They're not afraid of social media but they're paralyzed…[social media] are too interactive for them. It's not just that politicians are incapable, it's that they are very conservative" (personal communication, May 27, 2013). Mandravelis notes that there has been "very little" impact on politics from social media (personal communication, June 11, 2013), while Psara argues that "very few politicians have used social media as a component of their policymaking" (personal communication, November 11, 2013). In turn, Kapi argues that social and new media have become "fashionable" for politicians, who think that they are coming closer to the public via these tools, adding that "there have been no substantial political discussions and interventions in the political sphere" as a result of these tools (personal communication, June 3, 2013). Makri argues that the political dialogue taking place via social media has replicated

offline dialogue, stating that these tools have been used "…aimlessly, for petty issues and rumors and innuendo. They are not used for political purposes…" (personal communication, November 12, 2013), while Al-Saleh, highlighting an example with SYRIZA-owned newspaper *Avgi* was caught utilizing fake accounts on social media, expresses her opinion that social media are being used "against democracy, against the truth" (personal communication, January 11, 2014).

With regard to the potential influence of social and new media on social and protest movements, Zenakos notes two impacts: "[f]ueling activism, particularly the decision of someone to participate on the one hand, and in documenting police violence, I think that social and new media have been instrumental" (personal communication, July 19, 2013). Christos Kotsireas, a photoreporter and journalist with *Vmedia.gr*, argued that the political system:

> …is beginning to understand that the impact of media from below and of social media is something that they ultimately underestimated. They were counting on the public engaging in clicktivism, but things are not so simple. We saw the major role that social media played in the protests of 2011 and 2012 in Greece, where they were also used as a means of organizing. (Personal communication, July 2, 2013)

Tsimitakis stated that "[e]very possible strike, every possible demonstration in the center of Athens, is followed by tens or hundreds of Twitter users, Facebook users, bloggers, who follow the events, report on the events, talk about the events, constructing a narrative around them" (personal communication, February 13, 2013), while Contogeorgis credits social media's impact for creating movements which occur in physical space, while also formulating a political critical mass, adding his view that social and new media have fostered political intervention based on individual action instead of mass action, even if the individual participates with others (personal communication, December 19, 2016). Panagopoulos views social media's impact as significant for issues such as Skouries, but also for small, ad hoc protests (personal communication, May 31,

2013), while Iordanoglou argues that social media have helped "those who already had an active role [in activism] organize more easily" (personal communication, May 29, 2013).

On the contrary, Giannakidis views social and new media as a double-edged sword when it comes to activism: "sometimes they mobilize the public, as with the 'Indignants' but the opposite also occurs: people don't mobilize, don't take to the streets, they prefer to make a 'like' on a protest page and that's it" (personal communication, April 5, 2013), while Dourou notes that social media have served as an outlet for people's anger, but it remains to be seen what political impact they have (personal communication, July 3, 2013).

Chapter 7: Social and New Media and their Impact on the Media Sphere

7.1 – INTRODUCTION

In chapter 2 and in chapter 4, several of the longstanding pathologies of the Greek mainstream media landscape were introduced. These include the prevalence of clientelism and "diaploki," the overly politicized nature of the press and most mainstream media outlets, the haphazard and inconsistent regulatory framework within which the broadcast sector has operated in Greece, the closed market for broadcast news outlets created by the existing legislation, and the credibility crisis suffered by institutions such as the mass media and the press.

In this chapter, the manner in which new, primarily online-based or online-only media outlets have differentiated themselves from Greece's traditional media outlets (television stations, radio stations, and the press) will be examined, as well as the manner in which social and new media tools have been adopted both by these newly-formed outlets. Furthermore, the extent to which these new online outlets may potentially be serving as alternatives to Greece's mainstream media, presenting differing perspectives on political and social issues, will be analyzed. In addition, the credibility of these newly-created media outlets and of social and new media more broadly as sources of news and information, and the extent to which they may be considered more credible than mainstream media outlets, will also be examined.

Interviewees' perspectives on the issues of clientelism and "diaploki" and on the perceived credibility crisis of the Greek mainstream media will be presented. This will be followed by three illustrative examples, focusing on three distinct media entities: the Skai Media Group, *enikos.gr*, and Radiobubble. Following this, the role of ERT and the impact of the protest movement and worker-occupied broadcasts following the closure of ERT, including the role of

social and online media in this movement, will be looked at. Mainstream media and the extent to which they have adopted social and new media will then follow. After this, several new media initiatives and entities, many of which are primarily or exclusively based online, will be introduced and presented, with an examination at how they might be operating as alternatives to Greece's mainstream media outlets, how they have implemented social and new media in their operations, and to what extent they could be said to have been borne out of the economic crisis or the mainstream media's credibility crisis. Results of the electronic survey questionnaires will then be presented, followed by a discussion on the overall impact of social and new media upon Greece's mediascape during the period of the economic crisis. This chapter directly correlates with RQ3 and subquestions 3 and 4 of this research project.

7.2 – PERSPECTIVES ON CLIENTELISM AND "DIAPLOKI"

For Zenakos, "diaploki" is synonymous with political power:

> The state in Greece is political power, is judicial power, is a very tight group of financial players that control the vast majority of the sectors of the economy: shipping, construction, mining, tourism, the big things. They're in the hands of perhaps 10 people between them, who also own the media. It's like saying the state is the courts, the state is the police, the state is the dueling parties, the state is the businessmen, and they're all together, they flock to each other. (Personal communication, July 19, 2013)

Contogeorgis, in turn, sees "diaploki" as a reproduction of the central state and political system:

> Without a doubt, the central system reproduces itself at all levels, from local government, to the media, the political parties, the unions, the collectives, everywhere it reproduces itself, specifically its personality-driven and individualist character which produces clientelist politics…[Television] is transformed into a space where politics is produced, it is the space where the political system is constructed and where it operates in reality… The Parliament may be the government, the stage, but in reality this stage is constructed at will by television, determining the agenda, who will be represented, who will speak, who won't speak… (Personal communication, December 19, 2016)

Christoforidis, in explaining the system of "diaploki," defines it as distorted:

> There existed this distortion where those who owned newspapers were businesspeople who were active in other industries. They did not seek to operate a media outlet that would be viable or profitable and to make a living from that, with some few exceptions. They sought to take advantage of this medium in order to earn profits from their other ventures. This meant, of course, that the news was biased. Successive governments took advantage of this to shape public opinion and to pass through the major media outlets the government's perspective. (Personal communication, May 27, 2013)

Vaxevanis connects the "diaploki" system with the lack of enforceable broadcast regulation:

> The mass media landscape in Greece is anarchic, and this is intentional. It did not emerge as the result of some oversight. In Greece, to operate even a kiosk you need a permit, yet the television stations are unlicensed. They're illegal, their legal status is renewed each year [by the Parliament]…and this happens because in this way, a hostage situation develops between the media moguls and the political system. Prior to elections, the government will blackmail the television stations that they will not receive a license, and for the next four years the television stations will blackmail the government as to whether they will provide it with support or not. (Personal communication, March 6, 2013)

Kotsireas describes the development and existence of the "diaploki" system as "the biggest problem which exists today with regards to how the public is informed" (personal communication, July 2, 2013), while Efimeros described how his outlet, *The Press Project*, was:

> …approached by a major business mogul, who told us that he liked very much what we were doing and didn't not want an under-the-table agreement, just to be informed if there were any stories about him he should be aware about. In other words, not to target him. (Personal communication, July 18, 2013)

In Tsimitakis' view, this situation has become harmful for Greece's mainstream media system in the midst of the economic crisis: "[t]he media industry in Greece is collapsing due to the crisis. Not only the economic crisis, but also the particularities, the certain vulnerabilities of the specific national media industry in Greece, which has to do with corruption" (personal communication, February 13, 2013), while Kammenos connects the "diaploki" system with an increase in popularity of social media for news and information: "I believe that in terms of their intervention in public life, social media will continue to play an even bigger role because the Greek mass

media are controlled by people who maintain business relationships with the state" (personal communication, October 11, 2013).

7.3 – Perspectives on the Mass Media's Credibility Crisis

Karvounopoulos connects "diaploki" with the growing credibility crisis suffered by the mass media in Greece, though he cautions that the credibility crisis itself predates social media:

> [t]here is a huge credibility crisis, which is due to the fact that the citizens have become convinced, for years now, that the news and information they receive is part of the 'diaploki' system, which these days they consider primarily responsible for the situation the country is in. (Personal communication, June 28, 2013)

Vasilopoulos, in turn, connects both "diaploki" and the media's crisis of credibility, with the economic crisis and the stance of the media towards the economic policies of austerity:

> There is a major credibility crisis, because in Greece the publishers are intertwined with state and economic interests. These are the same public works contractors who in all the preceding years got wealthy due to their transactions with the state. They are heavily indebted, dependent on the banks, and only the protection afforded by the state and the banks is keeping them afloat…The public realized this in a very odious way during the economic crisis…while the same mass media and publishers tell them how great the policies of austerity are, and the cuts and firings. (Personal communication, June 5, 2013)

Vaxevanis noted that journalists were very much a part of this system of "diaploki," stating: "the fourth estate, instead of serving as a watchdog towards other institutions, became part of them…Dozens of journalists are employed in government press offices while also working as journalists, a conflict of interest" (personal communication, March 6, 2013).

Beyond just questioning the reliability of the media, some interviewees described the credibility crisis as being the product of anger towards the media and other national institutions more broadly. In the words of Fotinaki: "There is not just a crisis but anger too, and it's understandable…when the audience realizes that it is being fooled, at some point it withdraws its trust" (personal communication, July 5, 2013). Niflis notes that "nowadays the public is angry at

everyone, including the journalists and all the media, and does not trust television and the newspapers, because…they have shown that they represent certain interests" (personal communication, December 18, 2012), while Skarpelos highlighted one of the rallying cries at the protests of the "Indignants" in 2011, "bums, snitches, journalists," which were accompanied by an open palm gesture towards journalists which is considered insulting in the Greek culture (personal communication, May 29, 2013). Dourou connects the media's credibility crisis to a broader institutional credibility crisis: "We are living in a period where the citizens have not just discredited privately-owned television [but also] the unions, the parties, the Parliament and parliamentary procedures, and not without reason" (personal communication, July 3, 2013), while Andriotakis noted that political forces on both the left and the right have also utilized "extreme rhetoric" against the traditional media when deemed to be politically expedient (personal communication, May 27, 2013).

Other interviewees cited a chasm between the media and the public. As stated by Mandravelis, "[the media] never cared about the audience…they did not strive to serve the audience but instead to serve and not to disappoint the politicians" (personal communication, June 11, 2013). Madalena Papadopoulou stated that young people "have often seen a disconnect between the images of a televised report and what is actually being said…and realizes that it is an attempt at propaganda" (personal communication, November 11, 2013). Zenakos referenced his own personal experience working at a major newspaper, claiming that: "you were always encouraged to look down on your readers. It was very clear that you were in a position of power." (personal communication, July 19, 2013). Baganis stated that, for years, journalists "did

not know the truth [about corruption]…it's not that they knew and they concealed it, it's that they didn't know what was going on" (personal communication, December 19, 2012).

Another factor which was cited in the media's credibility crisis was their unreliability, missing or refusing to cover major stories, such as the financial crisis. As stated by Mangiriadis, "There is an issue with the credibility of the traditional media, for the most part because they were not able to predict the financial crisis that was coming" (personal communication, July 23, 2013). Freelance journalist Nikolia Apostolou cited the media's biased coverage of the "Indignants" as a possible turning point:

> … I remember there were one million people on the streets, there was a lot of tear gas, a lot of violence with no reason, so when people went back home that day and they turned on the TV and saw the news, the mainstream media…said that the police didn't use that much violence. So the people saw that there was a different world that the mainstream media was broadcasting…I think that it may not have been the only turning point, but I think that this helped people see that they are not always telling the truth or they are only giving one part of the truth. (Personal communication, May 24, 2013)

Vazouras cited the public opinion polls that are publicized, claiming that the mass media "have the ability to intervene in their outcome" (personal communication, May 31, 2013), to which Tolios adds "…we are also experiencing a crisis in political tools…such as polls. They were also shaping public opinion favorably for this party or the other. I think that people are losing faith in polls as well" (personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Economic factors were also cited by some interviewees. According to Panagopoulos, "the market was too small to sustain so many media outlets and journalists, and the result was that in order to survive and make money, they became parrots…" (personal communication, May 31, 2013). Trimis described most major media outlets as "…unviable, bankrupt…and in order to

survive they are increasingly turning towards the political and economic and banking elite" (personal communication, May 29, 2013).

For other interviewees though, the mass media's credibility crisis is overstated. Boubouka cited her experience as an active user of the #rbnews hashtag, stating that quite often, information that was circulating online and which was attributed to citizen journalists often originated from mainstream media reports (personal communication, May 31, 2013). Along a similar vein, Bakounakis noted the results of an exercise he performed with his students:

> I've conducted an exercise with my students at the university, telling them: 'you've learned that the Prime Minister is resigning and the government is collapsing, where will you turn to get informed?' The overwhelming majority of students, who are 19-20 years old, answer that they will turn to a traditional media outlet, because they believe it is the most credible. (Personal communication, March 8, 2013)

Kotsireas, however, addressed the issue of habitual viewing and people's perceptions that they can see through what the mainstream media is reporting:

> The public has gotten used to being informed by these [mainstream] outlets all these years. Slowly but surely they're beginning to understand that the information they are receiving from these mediums are associated with the interests of the owners of those outlets. I often hear people claim that they know the media are lying but they have the ability to filter what they hear. That's a myth, it's not possible, I've studied semiotics and understand that it's a myth that you can filter. (Personal communication, July 2, 2013)

Finally, Marios Lolos, president of the Greek Photojournalists' Union, noted that while there is a major credibility crisis on the part of the public towards the mass media, it is not applicable to all those who are working in the media: "[The public] understands that we are doing our job…we take photos based on certain standards…and we photograph violence against protesters…so there is no credibility crisis towards photojournalists" (personal communication, May 28, 2013).

7.4 – ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE: SKAI MEDIA GROUP

Serving as the mainstream media focus organization among the five illustrative examples for this study, the Skai Media Group is one of Greece's largest companies within the media and broadcasting sector, encompassing national broadcaster Skai TV, the Skai 100.3 FM news radio station in Athens, the *skai.gr* online portal, several other specialized websites and mobile applications, and other non-news radio stations. Also associated with the Skai Media Group is the *Kathimerini* newspaper and its online English-language edition, *e-Kathimerini*.

Skai and *Kathimerini* have developed a reputation of being the mainstream outlets of record in Greece, viewed by many as being more "serious" than many of Greece's other major media outlets. *Kathimerini*, in particular, is recognized as a newspaper with an influential editorial page and op-ed section which has often features contributions from intellectuals and academics, while *skai.gr* is one of the most popular online news portals in Greece. For others though, Skai is part and parcel of the same system of "diaploki" as all of the other major media entities in Greece, and is viewed as one of the most vehement supporters of the economic austerity measures which have been implemented in Greece since 2010. As a point of illustration, Tasos Oikonomou, a journalist with *Kathimerini*, characterized the newspaper's political perspective as "center-right" and stated his view that the newspaper has "a credibility which is connected to its political stance" (personal communication, April 10, 2013).

In 2013, Alex Hobson, then the head of new media for the Skai Media Group, provided an overview of the company's social media presence and efforts. Hobson highlighted the company's "big social media footprint in Greece," including a Twitter account with over 100,000 followers at that time, a Facebook page with approximately 85,000 likes as of the time of the

interview, a YouTube channel, and applications for iPhones, smart TVs and other devices. Hobson emphasized the importance of Skai's Facebook page for delivering visitors to the main *skai.gr* portal, stating that "60-75 percent of traffic is [from] Facebook," while visitors from Twitter accounted for far less traffic. Hobson stated that Skai's Twitter feed was automated, using a tool called Deliberate which grabbed news items from an RSS feed, while Skai's Facebook page was managed manually, as according to Hobson, "manual posts compared to automatic posts, have ten times more virality than the automatic posts." Hobson added that "[w]e have also given access to most of our journalists to our Twitter account who can post to our Twitter account or they can post and feed group tweets, which is another good tool that we use." Conversely, Skai's journalists did not engage in blogging or live blogging according to Hobson, who said that "[t]here is no reason behind it. We mainly use Twitter as a sort of live blogging experience for users." Hobson noted that Skai does engage in some interactivity with the public via social media, though not to a great extent: "when we have answered or participated on the Twitter conversation, it's been in a sort of friendly first person voice and that has been on purpose. We don't want to appear as just a frigid neutral web news source," adding that "we don't have enough resources, and…some of these conversations are very edgy." Commenting, however, was permitted on *skai.gr* via the Disqus platform, which Hobson noted was a significant driver of traffic to the website. Two journalists were responsible for approving pending comments (personal communication, April 9, 2013).

Newsroom functions had also begun to be converged as of 2013. Hobson stated that initially, television, radio, and the online portal had separate news teams, but that "internet and radio have converged into a one-use room," adding that "the first role of all our journalists are

for Skai" and that Skai's eventual strategy was to also converge the television newsroom. This convergence was implemented, according to Hobson, for "[e]fficiency mostly, but also to keep everyone on the same page, to have better editorial control over all media, [to] get people to be more flexible and more internet-aware." Adamidis, an editor and journalist with Skai TV, added: "[t]here is interest on the part of the journalists for their work to also appear on social media, but there was no systematic process for this. There was no unified set of editorial guidelines…This is still uncharted territory [for us] and management is still studying it carefully." Adamidis further added that "television reporters…don't prepare separate copy for the web. Their work is simply republished" (personal communication, April 10, 2013).

Regarding the popularity of Skai's social media and online presence, Hobson remarked:

> We are the leading news Twitter account right now in Greece by far…We are definitely in the top 10 websites. People have associated Skai with breaking news, so whenever there is something very important going on, they visit the website. For example, our record high was last year with the elections, we had 42 million page views in May of 2012. (Personal communication, April 9, 2013)

Noting that Twitter is advertised seven times per day on Skai TV, Hobson added that "[w]e are trying to be active participants on the Twittersphere, and that's why we promote it so much. It's not a source of revenue for us, but we realize that the nature of Twitter is mostly news-based." Hobson also emphasized that traditional television was still a major source of traffic to *skai.gr*: "TV is also...a big driver of traffic to the website…anytime a news presenter mentions something about *skai.gr*, you can see a lot of traffic" (personal communication, April 9, 2013).

In looking at the *Kathimerini* portal, which is separate from *skai.gr*, Oikonomou stated that the site is split into three sections: real-time news, news from the print edition, and comments and opinions from users on *Kathimerini's* editorials and opinion pieces. Oikonomou

added that all of the site's content is shared on Twitter but that only selected articles are posted on Facebook, while the newspaper was, at the time, while the newspaper's YouTube presence was under development. No original, web-exclusive content was posted on either the Facebook or Twitter accounts of *Kathimerini* (personal communication, April 10, 2013). According to Hobson, the amount of visitors to *Kathimerini's* website was comparable to other Greek newspapers but lower than that of *skai.gr* (personal communication, April 9, 2013). Pashos Mandravelis, a journalist with *Kathimerini*, described the newspaper's online strategy as "shoveling," stating that "90 percent of what is published is simply material from the print edition…and some few young kids who are working there, very few, are trying hard to publish other content but it isn't enough." Mandravelis also highlighted the three ways he uses social media as a journalist: posting his articles online, posting articles by others that are of interest to him, and posting his thoughts and musings that are not substantial enough for a full article (personal communication, June 11, 2013).

In looking at Skai TV's connection to social media, Hobson noted that many of the station's personalities used Twitter extensively to communicate with the audience, highlighting the example of late morning host Popi Tsapanidou, "who has a major Twitter account in Greece, she has more followers than Skai itself and she uses her account to communicate with her viewers on a daily basis." Hobson noted that there was no such interaction on the part of station's newscasts with social media, however (personal communication, April 9, 2013). Adamidis noted that there was no official station policy regarding the maintenance of a social media presence for television programs, stating that such a presence exists because "our personnel want to be [on social media] and to gain that audience" (personal communication, April 10, 2013).

Skai 100.3 FM Radio had also introduced some interactive elements into its operations. Hobson described an online application that was developed for this purpose:

> If you go to the radio station website, you can click on the form we have, so while you are listening, you can send a comment to the person on the microphone, so for example we send a message and the radio produces inside the station has access, there's a page where he can see all the comments, so this is visible only to the news room inside, so he can see what people are sending while they are listening to the show and he comments on these posts during the live show. (Personal communication, April 9, 2013)

Interviewees not affiliated with Skai also largely highlighted Skai for its effective and prevalent social media use, at least as compared to other major media outlets in Greece. According to Iliadi, Skai was a pioneer in getting its television personalities on Twitter, noting that "Twitter became popular [in Greece] when it began to be promoted on TV" (personal communication, May 26, 2013), while Kapi stated her opinion that Skai "is probably one of the only outlets which has attempted to tap in to the immediacy and essence of social media and their interactivity" (personal communication, June 3, 2013).

In a follow-up interview in 2017, Maria Alafouzou, head of new media for the Skai Media Group, described the company's holistic view of social media and the shift from medium-based operation to operating as a unified brand across multiple platforms and services:

> Considering new and social media as a contribution to a media group's strategy is in itself flawed. Media has moved from medium-based companies such as television and newspapers, to brands that have all platforms. It doesn't matter whether you're a television station, a newspaper or a website, you need to think about translating your content across all mediums. If you're a TV station, how does the story translate to the internet? To written form? To a tweet? To an engaging snap? To a short video for Facebook? If you're a website, how does the article you're writing translate to a video? How can you edit that video so that it can access more users on Facebook? Stories and content no longer have a beginning and an end, they're spherical and need to be able to survive on all platforms. (Personal communication, April 7, 2017)

As a result, social media in itself is also viewed as a competitor: "It's a competitor for every publication and on many different levels…in the sense that you're losing readers to platforms like Facebook and Apple News, where users still access your content but you don't get a hit on your analytics." This, in turn, has led to questions about which social media strategy to best implement: "One of the issues we're having at the moment is trying to figure out how each product under the Skai umbrella fits in and what role it plays. Should Skai have a breaking news Twitter? An entertainment account?" (personal communication, April 7, 2017).

Alafouzou noted that Skai's newsroom was unified, but similarly to 2013, there was no dedicated social media manager: "We have one person on our digital team who oversees content on social media, but she also has a full time job as an editor, so we don't actually have one specific person dedicated to social media," adding that "[w]e work together as a newsroom to publish our social media, with individuals from separate shows pitching in to write their tweets specific to their shows." In Alafouzou's view, however, "[i]n an ideal world we'd have a social media manager, and indeed that's the direction we're moving in, but for now we have several members from the newsroom involved." Alafouzou noted that Skai continued to be very active on Facebook and Twitter, with Facebook still providing the highest conversion rate for *skai.gr*, but due to a lack of resources, Skai was not on Instagram or other social mediums. Alafouzou further stated that, similarly to 2013, each individual program made its own decisions regarding its social media presence. As stated by Alafouzou, "Involvement for personalities and shows is on an individual basis, whether the person or show has an interest in social media. That needs to change…it's a question of bringing [them] together under one umbrella in a way that makes sense." Finally, Alafouzou stated that Skai was not as active in terms of interaction with the

audience using social media: “Not as much as we’d like to. We use hashtags and will respond to some users on social media but it’s more of a lack of resources as opposed to a lack of desire to do so” (personal communication, April 7, 2017).

Skai was no stranger to controversy and to questions regarding its credibility. In chapter 5, the example of the #xa_advertising Twitter campaign was highlighted, which stemmed from a controversial television program which was broadcast on Skai TV where members of Golden Dawn appeared. Adamidis stated that in response to the backlash, “the station did not have an official response. The official policy of the station is that we don’t censor our programming in any way.” Adamidis added that “I am not certain whether the station should have implemented a crisis management strategy” (personal communication, April 10, 2013). Hobson noted however that despite receiving a lot of negative comments online via Disqus, visits to *skai.gr* spiked following the controversy (personal communication, April 9, 2013).

Journalist Aris Chatzistefanou highlighted another controversial instance involving the Skai Media Group, where he used to produce a radio program on Skai Radio. This controversy was related to the release of his first documentary, *Debtocracy*, noting that he “was fired just a few days before my documentary went online” (personal communication, June 26, 2013).

Nikos Andritsos highlighted his view that Skai’s impact on the Greek public sphere was positive: “I believe that Skai is a serious source of news…[a] news source where you can learn what’s happening, see ideas, get all the perspectives which exist and where there is a clear line between news and commentary” (personal communication, April 12, 2013), while regarding credibility, Alafouzou remarked: “[t]hrough our social media we are very careful to confirm

sources and information on breaking news rather than jumping the gun. We're looking for accuracy and speed, but accuracy always comes first" (personal communication, April 7, 2017).

7.5 – ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE: ENIKOS.GR

Founded in 2011, *enikos.gr* is an outlet which could be said to combine elements of both traditional and online media, including the operations of an online news portal, blogging, citizen journalism, and conventional television. Founded in 2011, it was the creation of journalist Nikos Chatzinikolaou, who has had a long career as a television news presenter and talk show host on both television and radio, and who is one of the most prominent media personalities in Greece. Chatzinikolaou is the owner of the widely circulated *Real News* Sunday newspaper, and the top-rated Real FM 97.8 and Real FM 107.1 radio stations in Athens and Thessaloniki, respectively.

Manos Niflis, the editor of *enikos.gr*, described the concept behind the site as "combining the immediacy of news blogs with accurate reporting." According to Niflis, the idea for *enikos.gr* originated with Chatzinikolaou, who wanted "a blog, not a portal with many different sections and long articles, but something very immediate and quick which would inform the public about everything, to be everywhere, with photos, video and short pieces." Giorgos Baganis, a journalist with *enikos.gr*, remarked that the site "was created to fill a void in immediate and accurate news reporting from the entire news spectrum," adding that a gap of even 5-10 minutes between postings results in a 20-25 percent drop in visits (personal communication, December 19, 2012). Batzoglou described *enikos.gr* as a "child of private television" which is operating as a "real-time wire service with very short articles, sometimes as little as 40 words, and content from the audience" (personal communication, May 24, 2013).

Valios Roupis, social media manager with *enikos.gr*, noted that the site carries the name of its founder ("e-Nikos"), and as such means that the site's journalists "are very careful with what they are publishing to ensure that everything has been cross-checked and verified" (personal communication, April 12, 2013), while Baganis, referring to the name recognition of Chatzinikolaou, described him as the "guarantor" of the site's accuracy and credibility (personal communication, December 19, 2012). Interestingly, e*nikos.gr* bears a striking resemblance to the former *Troktiko* blog, and remarking on this, Roupis stated that the site was designed purposely to resemble a blog, adding that Chatzinikolaou "already operates a portal [*real.gr*], therefore he did not want *enikos.gr* to be yet another portal" (personal communication, April 12, 2013). Baganis, in turn, stated that *enikos.gr* is indeed a blog and not a portal (personal communication, December 19, 2012), a view which Boubouka disagrees with: "[i]t's a blog, a personal blog, yet it isn't, because behind it is a newsroom, but journalists don't sign their names. Chatzinikolaou is the visible face," whilst adding that "even though Chatzinikolaou owns *Real News* and *real.gr*, his true investment is in *enikos.gr*" (personal communication, May 31, 2013). Regarding the political stance of *enikos.gr*, Niflis commented that the site is accused of being both on the left and on the right, "which means we are neither" (personal communication, December 18, 2012).

On the topic of feedback and interaction with the audience, Roupis stated that *enikos.gr* actively seeks out news from its audience and provides ways for such stories to be submitted, adding that 90 percent of e-mails and Facebook messages are replied to, while comments on Facebook are not responded to (personal communication, April 12, 2013), while Niflis stated that "stories are added which are produced by members of the audience or who want to express themselves…it's something we want to invest in" (personal communication, December 18,

2012). Even though *enikos.gr* did not respond to comments posted on its social media channels, Baganis remarked that commenting is free and encouraged, adding that "here, our readers know that we will read all of their comments." Baganis added that Chatzinikolaou's own social media presence[51] has helped deliver an audience to *enikos.gr*:

> Nikos Chatzinikolaou, with the presence he has developed on Twitter, responds to everyone who poses a question…he writes about the team he loves, he shares his philosophical musings, his thoughts on politics, economics. In doing this he won the attention of an audience who…who knew him only as a television personality, and this audience in large part does not enter *real.gr* or purchase *Real News*. This audience came to *enikos.gr* because they saw a different Chatzinikolaou, who approached them and opened up to the public. (Personal communication, December 19, 2012)

Social media was described by Niflis as the "the main pillar of our strategy," with an active presence on Facebook and Twitter, noting that many news stories were also reported to *enikos.gr* via this avenue (personal communication, December 18, 2012). Baganis added that *enikos.gr* was built around Chatzinikolaou's own social media presence, and that Facebook and Twitter were the main drivers of traffic for the site (personal communication, December 19, 2012). According to Roupis, two staffers were primarily tasked with social media duties, including one individual for data analysis (personal communication, April 12, 2013).

One of the main attractions of *enikos.gr* during the 2012-2013 time period was the *Ston Eniko* web TV program, which was a continuation of a television program by the same name which Chatzinikolaou had hosted on broadcast television stations. This was an extended interview and discussion program where Chatzinikolaou featured one or more panelists, often in front of a live studio audience, which would also submit questions. Baganis described the show as "an experiment which is being attempted for the first time in Greece, to show that it is possible in the future to combine the speed and liveliness of television, with the web" (personal

[51] See https://www.twitter.com/nchatzinikolaou.

communication, December 19, 2012), while Roupis stated his belief that the web TV show was a reflection of Chatzinikolaou's "desire to host a program as he would want to do it and as he imagined it…without the restrictions which any given television station could impose" (personal communication, April 12, 2013). Niflis highlighted the live chats with candidates for office which *Ston Eniko* hosted during the 2012 election cycle, while noting that programs were not aired on a set schedule as the program was still in an experimental phase, but typically new programs were produced every one to two weeks. Niflis also described the changes made by Chatzinikolaou when the program was transferred from broadcast television to the internet: "Nikos Chatzinikolaou changed the format of the show…Now there is a live audience, around 50 to 60 people who submit questions. In essence, Chatzinikolaou doesn't host the show, the citizens do…The online audience is more active" (personal communication, December 18, 2012). Roupis described the audience's response to *Ston Eniko*: "…the viewers literally bombard us with questions via phone calls to *enikos.gr*, via Chatzinikolaou's Twitter account, and via the Twitter and Facebook accounts of *enikos.gr*," adding that the interactive nature of the program was later copied by major broadcast television stations, who started bringing live studio audiences to their shows (personal communication, April 12, 2013). Batzoglou noted that the online version of *Ston Eniko* had "no limits" as compared to the broadcast version, as it had the freedom to stick to one topic and to run as long as necessary instead of being confined by a program schedule (personal communication, May 24, 2013).

In remarking on the audience's overall response to *enikos.gr*, Niflis noted that in its first 10 months of operation, the site had entered Nielsen's top 10 websites in Greece and Alexa's top 20 (personal communication, December 18, 2012). Baganis stated that this was accomplished

only with advertising within the same media group (Real Group) (personal communication, December 19, 2012), while Roupis commented that Chatzinikolaou's credibility and name recognition had helped (personal communication, April 12, 2013). Niflis stated he considered *enikos.gr* an "alternative" medium due to the way it operates: "speed, credibility, contact with the audience, integration of social media"—in other words, being alternative to its main competitors (personal communication, December 18, 2012), while Baganis noted the site's impact on the political sphere: "[u]sually when we write about a politician or a government minister or ministry and we publish a complaint from a reader, within the next 20 minutes at most…there is a response from the ministry or from the minister or politician" (personal communication, December 19, 2012).

In a follow-up interview in 2017, Niflis described the continued strong emphasis of social media in the operations of *enikos.gr*, describing them as "the basic communications tool for the dissemination of our news and postings," adding that Facebook and Twitter remained the main pylons of the site's social media presence, while other social media tools were not used. Niflis stated that five people were now working mostly on social media, but the entire staff had received training in its use (personal communication, March 15, 2017).

Niflis remarked on some of the changes which had occurred at *enikos.gr* since 2012-2013: "[we] are attempting to tailor and customize our content for the needs of social media…this was a necessity." Notably, Niflis described the site as a *portal*—which he did not do in 2012—but one which visually resembles a blog and one which was different from a static news website. As was the case in 2012, "speed and immediacy" remained the site's selling

points. Finally, though the *Ston Eniko* web program had stopped its webcasts, Niflis stated that it would "probably return" (personal communication, March 15, 2017).

7.6 – Illustrative Example: Radiobubble and #rbnews

7.6.1 – Introduction

In chapter 5, the illustrative example of Radiobubble was examined from the perspective of civil society, via the initiatives which it helped to launch, Hackademy and Tutorpool, and via its collaboration with Doctors Without Borders. In this chapter, the programmatic and news aspect of Radiobubble will be presented and analyzed. Radiobubble is an online radio station which became widely-known in Greece and worldwide for its news programming, including coverage of the "Indignants" protest movement and other social movements, and also as a result of its very prominent and innovative presence on social media, particularly Twitter via its #rbnews hashtag. The station was also known for its physical location, a café in central Athens where its studios were located, although the café closed in 2014, obliging Radiobubble to relocate its studios.

7.6.2 – Concept

Dora Oikonomides, a volunteer with Radiobubble, described the station as such:

> Radiobubble is a very strange animal in Greece, because it is an online community essentially. Radiobubble as a whole has many components. One of it is the news component, which I contribute to, there is one part which is about music…one part is blogs, where basically there is a team of people monitoring the Greek bloggers here and selecting what they find interesting. There is one section called "the community," where anyone can choose to create a radio show or a podcast and upload it to that section. The idea overall is user-generated content. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Radiobubble was founded in 2007 according to Petros Papathanasiou, a producer with the station (personal communication, December 17, 2012), and initially "was a group of people who knew

each other. And then they met other people and met other people, and then they also started meeting people through Twitter, so it expanded slowly and it became what it is now," as stated by Oikonomides, who added that the initial founding team consisted of 5-6 people (personal communication, December 17, 2012). Panagiotis Oikonomou, a producer with Radiobubble, described the station as a second chance to create what is known in Greece as "free radio": "[w]ith the advent of privately-owned radio, the frequencies were taken over by certain businesspeople and 'free radio' could not develop. We've made an attempt, through the opportunity provided to us by new media, to establish a free internet radio station," adding his belief that "traditional radio in Greece is dead." According to Oikonomou, the main distinction of *Radiobubble* when compared to other media outlets is its self-organized nature and collective decision-making, noting that the station operates commercial free with no financial backer (personal communication, February 13, 2013).

Oikonomides described Radiobubble as a station which has earned a strong leftist reputation, but which is open to and desires other viewpoints: "[w]e are called a left-wing station or an anarchist station, and we would like to have a bigger diversity of opinions to be presented here than what we already have," adding that the station used to feature certain programs from individuals of a right-wing political persuasion. However, "because after the elections [of 2012] the political divide of Greece became so deep, they just stopped coming… I would like to have more liberals and neoliberals in here (personal communication, December 17, 2012).

7.6.3 – Café and Community

Having earlier introduced Greece's longstanding "café culture," it is perhaps fitting that Radiobubble is a station which in its initial years of existence developed a community which

centered around its physical space, a café in the Exarchia district of central Athens—a region which has long been a hub of political and activist activity, as well as resistance and rebellion.

Papathanasiou described the Radiobubble community as one which transcends the local geographic community of Athens: "[t]he community of Radiobubble does not have a local character. Yes of course initially it was centered in Athens and then in Greece, but it collected people, students that were overseas and who were tweeting and following the station." The café, in Papathanasiou's words, served as a catalyst to bring this online community into the physical world: "…from there where a typical internet community had started developing, a group of many friends arose who knew each other in person precisely because Radiobubble exists" (personal communication, December 17, 2012). Christina Lardikou, a producer with Radiobubble and volunteer with Tutorpool, described the café as an advantage for Radiobubble: "…you can hang around here, you can have your show, you can listen [to the station], but if you want, you can also come here and drink a coffee and be here…it's not something that is only in the internet," while social media is also added to the mix: "[the café] has many people who are very into social media and blogs and have really good blogs right now and have shows and hang around here (personal communication, February 20, 2013). Konstantopoulou described the café as a space which served as a "meeting point" for individuals who initially met each other online (personal communication, February 15, 2013), while Papathanasiou described the café as "a catalyst" for the Radiobubble community to get to know each other and as a space where issues pertaining to politics, economics, and communications issues were discussed (personal communication, December 17, 2012). Oikonomides described the significance of the café:

> To create a public space, real or virtual, is a service to society. So I would say that the existence of this community is a service to society, because you will have people from

> different backgrounds, with different centers of interest, who will disagree on pretty much everything, but who still think it's useful to operate as a network. So this is our contribution. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Within this space, according to Oikonomides, numerous initiatives were born:

> I think that Radiobubble's contribution is that it provides a public space where things can be debated, different opinions can be discussed, different initiatives can be undertaken, because another thing you will find here is that many of the most interesting initiatives in Greece over the past year, started inside Radiobubble. Tutorpool started inside Radiobubble. Hackademy, the new training project, is a Radiobubble project. This is a place, that not only physically, but even virtually, ideas develop. I think that's the real contribution to the public sphere. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Notably, the online world had a pervasive influence even in the offline physical setting of the café. As stated by Oikonomides: "…a lot of people continue calling each other by their Twitter names, even after they've known each other for months and months and months. I mean there are people whose real names I don't even know." Regarding the Radiobubble community at large, Oikonomides described it as including "anybody who wanted to be a part of it," including listeners or those who tweeted using the #rbnews hashtag (personal communication, December 17, 2012). Oikonomou described the melding of the station's radio programming and the physical meeting space: "…there is another type of communication, the studio as you can see is upstairs, the host on the air is visible, so anybody can see him, go up and have a drink, and chat with him. We're not faceless" (personal communication, February 13, 2013).

7.6.4 – Programming

According to Oikonomides, "the basic rule is that there is no rule" at Radiobubble. The station, she says, has no editorial policy and values diversity of opinion, adding that there are no restrictions when it comes to music: "…you have anything, from jazz, to Greek music, to rock'n'roll, to reggae, to anything you can imagine" (personal communication, December 17,

2012). As stated by Papathanasiou, the station, by design, maintains an "amateur" aesthetic: "…the show producers have full freedom as to what they want to do. The station intentionally maintains an amateur feel. Even producers who are professionals maintain this amateurism" (personal communication, December 17, 2012).

Oikonomides hosted Radiobubble's foreign-language radio program, Radiobubble International, describing its structure and audience:

> The first half hour is a news bulletin of the week in English, then there is a one-hour show where I interview someone, and it can be on the news of the week or it can be on a specific topic. And then in the end, we have news bulletins in English, in French and Spanish, for the international audience. We realized that there was a need for this type of independent information for people who are abroad. One reason is that the "Occupy" movement happened at the same time and then a lot of non-Greeks started becoming interested in what was happening here, so we found that there was a need to speak to that audience as well. So it's a little bit of hybrid, because we have both journalists and activists [listening]. That makes it at times difficult to speak to both, because they are not looking at the same things. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Regarding the station's news programming, Papathanasiou outlined Radiobubble's philosophy:

> The news department does not invite political figures. Systematically though we invite ordinary people, people who are involved in activism, people who are involved in the health or education sectors, and we prefer to speak to them even about politics, rather than with government representatives. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Oikonomou described Radiobubble's programming as innovative and pioneering, and listed three "firsts" for the station, stating that it was the only radio station in Greece to provide full coverage of Barack Obama's re-election in 2012, with 15 hours of coverage, including reports from correspondents located around the world. Secondly according to Oikonomou, Radiobubble was the first station in Greece to prepare and present day-long cultural specials for such figures as Greek composer Manos Hatzidakis. Third, he noted that the radio station was distinct for its civil

society role, supporting via its broadcasts initiatives such as food drives and the Gaza Flotilla while "using social media to create a social radio" (personal communication, February 13, 2013).

According to Papathanasiou, anybody could join the station and produce their own programming, as long as they loved radio and were willing to commit to a schedule (personal communication, December 17, 2012). Oikonomou stated that he joined Radiobubble—as well as Twitter—following the riots of December 2008, noting that the station "was the only medium…which managed to relay the truth about what was happening on the streets of Athens," while his show was as a reflection of his shared Twitter account, @contrabbando. Papathanasiou noted that the station's online program schedule listed the hosts' personal Twitter accounts alongside the name of their shows, connecting their radio shows to their social media presence (personal communication, December 17, 2012). In another interesting example, Panos Kounenakis described how he was able to become a part of the station's community from afar: "I started my [radio show]…while I was in South Korea. I started back in 2009, remotely uploading shows, and in 2011 when I came back in Greece, I got to know the people and I started being more active in the community" (personal communication, June 13, 2017).

Overall according to Oikonomides, the station was reaching approximately 4,000 listeners per month as of late 2012, with total listening hours ranging between 70,000 and 90,000 hours per month (personal communication, December 17, 2012).

7.6.5 – #rbnews and Social Media

According to Papathanasiou, in the midst of the riots transpiring in Athens in December 2008 following the shooting death of 15-year old Alexandros Grigoropoulos, the #rbnews hashtag was born on Twitter. The impact was immediate. Papathanasiou stated that "an

ecosystem developed surrounding this hashtag, through which the individuals appeared who developed our news department" (personal communication, December 17, 2012). Noting that there were 5-6 regular users of the hashtag per day and an average of 100 Twitter users per week, Oikonomides described #rbnews as the news department's most powerful tool:

> …our most powerful tool is #rbnews. The purpose of that hashtag is for people out there in the streets to be able to tweet information about important things that are happening in Greece: if there are demonstrations, if there is an important event in your neighborhood. Contributors to the hashtag [are] people from Radiobubble…but also people who might tweet using that hashtag once a year…The hashtag is a relatively well-known and respected institution on Greek Twitter… demonstrations are clearly the best example of how you can gather information from users, but we are also very successful in using it to know about events that are not mentioned at all in the mainstream media, to report racist attacks…even cultural events. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Unlike the "no rules" environment of the radio programming aired by Radiobubble, there were some rules connected to the proper use of the #rbnews hashtag, according to Oikonomides:

> …there are some basic rules: for example the fact that we don't do commentary. We will do analysis, but not commentary. On the Twitter feed we are very strict, even amongst ourselves. Then, within the Radiobubble news team, there is a group of people who sit on Twitter on shifts and who will filter information from the hashtag and upload that information to a tool that we have on our main page, where we curate basically the news that is forwarded to us by citizens…We are very conscious about putting the news on our feed, on our curation tool, because we need to be sure what is happening (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Oikonomides noted that her Twitter activity is what brought her to Radiobubble:

> I started tweeting about Greece in June 2011, and then someone contacted me and said "why don't you put the #rbnews hashtag, since you are tweeting mostly news, so that people know, people can curate what you say." Then one day, people from Radiobubble contacted me and asked me "do you want to become an administrator on the Twitter curation topic? …and then it was to be slowly defined that we should have some form of Radiobubble International. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

It is this curation that likely captured the attention of *The Guardian* prior to the June 2012 parliamentary elections in Greece:[52]

> …the most interesting example was during the second elections in June [2012], when *The Guardian* bought our English language Twitter feed and embedded it in their live blog for two days, because they knew that after following it for so long, that it was a reliable source of information. In general, I would say that a lot of foreign media had various information on the #rbnews hashtag. I don't know how many of them realized that there is a better source of information which is what we curated, because we had already done the work verifying everything that is there. (Personal communication, December 17, 2012)

Kounenakis noted that #rbnews was the most widely-used hashtag in Greece in 2011 due to its prominence during "Indignants" movement (personal communication, June 13, 2017). Boubouka described #rbnews as an "alternative medium" (personal communication, May 31, 2013), but Apostolou questioned whether #rbnews and the news efforts of Radiobubble could be considered citizen journalism, "because there are some people that are [professional] journalists" (personal communication, May 24, 2013), while Papathanasiou pointed out that the professional journalists involved with Radiobubble "wanted to support us and also believe in changing the model of their profession" (personal communication, December 17, 2012).

Above and beyond the #rbnews hashtag, Radiobubble maintained an active social media presence more broadly. In Kounenakis' view, "The Greek Twitter started practically by the community of Radiobubble. It was one of the pioneers and in the beginning it was alongside the academic, intellectuals or IT, or political freaks [early adapters]" (personal communication, June 13, 2017). Papathanasiou explained why Radiobubble was an early presence on Twitter: "From the beginning, Radiobubble placed a greater emphasis on Twitter, as Twitter is more immediate

[52] See https://www.theguardian.com/world/greek-election-blog-2012/2012/jun/17/greek-elections-greece-polls-live.

and more expressive than Facebook…it invested [in Twitter] precisely because it understood the philosophy of Twitter and it benefited from this" (personal communication, December 17, 2012).

The early emphasis on Twitter was evident in the makeup of Radiobubble's volunteers. According to Oikonomou, more than half the people who were involved with the station since 2008 were "well-known on Twitter" (personal communication, February 13, 2013) while according to Oikonomides, the station maintained two official accounts on Twitter, @radiobubble and @radiobubblenews (personal communication, December 17, 2012). Facebook, by comparison, was de-emphasized, used only for presenting the radio programming, according to Lardikou (personal communication, February 20, 2013).

In Papathanasiou's view, Radiobubble maintained "the most vibrant internet and social media presence of any web radio in Greece," adding that separate blogs were also administered, including a blog with news content, a blog about music, and a blog about blogging. Using his show as an example, Papathanasiou estimated that 90 percent of communication with listeners during his program occurs via Twitter, with the remainder via Facebook and e-mail. Overall, Papathanasiou estimated that there were approximately 2,000 listeners who engaged with the station via social media in some way each month, with about 200 "regulars," mostly technologically fluent young adults (personal communication, December 17, 2012).

7.6.6 – Early Challenges

In Oikonomides's words, Radiobubble has a positive and a negative aspect: "…using the internet…It means that of course, we get to reach a very wide and diverse audience. The shortcoming is, because internet penetration in Greece is just barely 50 percent, there is an intrinsic limitation to what we are doing" (personal communication, December 17, 2012). For

Papathanasiou though, finances were the biggest challenge for the station, noting that the café on its own did not produce enough revenue to sustain the station, adding however that the station had up until that time relied successfully upon donations to stay afloat (personal communication, December 17, 2012). For Oikonomou, the station's biggest difficulties pertained both to financial and human resources, noting that time was an issue with the all-volunteer staff (personal communication, February 13, 2013). Legal troubles could also not be avoided, as a Radiobubble on-air host was sued by prominent businessman Andreas Vgenopoulos in 2009.[53]

7.6.7 – Evolution: 2015 and 2017 Follow-ups

A series of changes were observed in the operation of Radiobubble and in its social media activity and presence in follow-up interviews which took place in February 2015 and in June 2017. Two major changes were the station's renewed formation as a legally registered cooperative, and a change in the physical location following the closure of the café, with the station relocating to the Theater 104, located in the Kerameikos district of Athens.

As stated by Radiobubble volunteer Ioanna Paraskevopoulou, "there is a greater emphasis being placed on radio rather than Twitter," adding that "radio was always the heart of Radiobubble. It was never social media, even if this impression always existed because it became widely known on Twitter, leading the public to focus on Twitter even if our heart was in radio." Paraskevopoulou stated that the station's programming had not significantly changed due to the change in legal status and that approximately the same number of individuals (around 40) were involved with the station as before, while adding that any individual could become a member of the collective which was formed. A drawback, however, was the lack of interaction in the new

[53] See http://news.radiobubble.gr/2012/06/copy-off-m-radiobubble.html.

space as compared to the café, which according to Paraskevopoulou was not a result of choice but of necessity (personal communication, February 2, 2015).

Paraskevopoulou did note that news content was largely de-emphasized by Radiobubble, with nobody on the station's staff creating original news content. Curation of content from other sources did continue, however, while the station's @radiobubble and @radiobubblenews Twitter accounts remained active, as did its Facebook presence. Radiobubble did perform tweeting of special events though, such as the January 2015 national parliamentary elections. According to Paraskevopoulou, her tweets for Radiobubble covering the January 2015 electoral campaign focused on the candidates and on "juicy" and investigative items of information about them, such as whether they had previously voted for the memorandum agreements as members of a different party. Overall though, the station no longer maintained news or Twitter shifts according to Paraskevopoulou, even though she herself continued to maintain the station's foreign-language social media presence, exclusively on Twitter (personal communication, February 2, 2015).

Regarding Radiobubble's social media content, Paraskevopoulou noted that most of the content posted by the station consisted of news, show archives, and promotional material for the station's programs. A significant change that was described, however, was the splitting of the #rbnews hashtag into two and the creation of the #antireport hashtag. According to Paraskevopoulou, the #rbnews hashtag was intended to be "more journalistic" while #antireport targets "counter-reporting and the anarchist world," including protest marches, instances of police violence, invitations to rallies, and cases of violence against migrants. Paraskevopoulou noted that while the old rules still were applicable for using the #rbnews hashtag, no such rules applied to #antireport (personal communication, February 2, 2015). Paraskevopoulou did note

one new challenge which faced Radiobubble and its political coverage, following the outcome of the January 2015 elections and the victory of SYRIZA:

> With the left I am feeling more insecure regarding news than I did when the right governed. Why? Because previously the lines were drawn. There were those who did what they did, supporting the system, and there were the alternative media which were far left and which opposed the government. What will those far left outlets do now though with a leftist government? …As a journalist you have to be across from them and scrutinizing them. Here it will become apparent to what extent those sites that are friendly to the left will scrutinize the government or will be obliged to spread propaganda. (Personal communication, February 2, 2015)

In a second follow-up interview in 2017, Kounenakis shed further light on the changes which had transpired at Radiobubble. According to Kounenakis:

> There was a change…before we moved, when we reached a limit when financially it couldn't go on. There was the big question, how do we continue? A significant part of the Radiobubble community didn't want to go the way we did. The majority wanted to go the way we did, so there was a split around 2014. (Personal communication, June 13, 2017)

Ultimately the collective was formed and legally registered, with Kounenakis stating that he was one of the 10 or 11 people who were its signatories. However, this was not the only change. As stated by Kounenakis, "Radiobubble doesn't contribute much in the public sphere…we are not covering news the way we did. We take initiatives in some campaigns, but…through Twitter, which was our basic tool, we don't use it for news broadcasting." Another major change pertains to social media, where according to Kounenakis, "[w]e focus more on Facebook as the Radiobubble central account…Facebook attracts more attention at the moment…and this has to do with the power of texts and images and interaction. Facebook is more friendly in general…and doesn't have so many constraints." Kounenakis added that no other social media tools are used by Radiobubble. Along with these changes, Kounenakis stated that the #rbnews hashtag shifted to #rbdata: "…the team that was working mainly on the news production…and

when the refugee crisis exploded, it turned into a team trying to be active on that field…They started data mining…So [#rbnews] was turned into #rbdata." In turn, the #antireport hashtag never attained the same level of response and has largely been de-emphasized according to Kounenakis, who notes that different hashtags are now used by Radiobubble depending on the circumstances (personal communication, June 13, 2017).

News and politics were not completely eliminated, however, as Kounenakis noted: "[t]here are political shows of course, but they are not trying to be up-to-date and there are initiatives concerning refugees that we are trying to participate in and we are running." Despite this, another former cornerstone of the station, its international service, had ceased, as stated by Kounenakis: "we do not, for the time being, produce anything in English." News and political content was also deemphasized on Facebook, which was now used mostly to emphasize musical content according to Kounenakis, who also described the station's adaptation of Mixcloud for asynchronous broadcasting: "We are looking for new ways. Mixcloud is one of these tools that we think it is the future, which is free, open. It's a broadcast that you can use it any time." Finally, Kounenakis noted that another one of Radiobubble's prominent initiatives, Hackademy, "worked for three seasons, but it collapsed due to financial pressures." For Kounenakis, Radiobubble's continued existence remained an open question:

> It's a tough question because we are not committed to continue. We have said that there is no stress, we don't owe to anyone anything, we will continue only if we like it and if we are useful and if we contribute to society. (Personal communication, June 13, 2017)

7.7 – THE ERT SHUTDOWN AND THE ERT OPEN MOVEMENT

National state-owned broadcaster ERT was not, it could be said, a beloved institution in Greece. For many, it was a haven of patronage hires, clientelistic relations, and corruption

cultivated by successive governments. For others, its programming was uninteresting. And for others still, it was a propaganda tool that was not independent from the state in the true sense of a national public service broadcaster. Elefteria Farantaki, the head of the Technical Services Division for ERT3, ERT's Thessaloniki-based television station, described the situation as follows: ".[p]ublic broadcasting had become state broadcasting, in the full sense of the term. Each government and each administration that it pointed maintained a pro-government policy" (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

The coalition government of New Democracy, PASOK, and DIMAR may have counted upon this sentiment muting any opposition when on June 11, 2013, in a sudden and unannounced move, they shut down ERT, announcing the firing of its entire staff and the impending establishment of a new public broadcaster. What began instead was a major solidarity and protest movement, where the staff of ERT occupied its main headquarters in Athens and ERT3's television studios in Thessaloniki and kept a number of transmitters on the air, broadcasting a non-stop protest broadcast, while protest rallies and concerts were organized on a daily basis outside of these facilities. Farantaki described the reaction which followed the shutdown:

> From the 11th of June and thereafter, our communication with the public changed. We were no longer inviting the public, the public came on its own to our social media…and their concern now is how we are doing, giving us the strength to carry on. The public does not accept the shutdown of ERT and the manner in which it occurred, not just in opposition to its replacement, NERIT, but also because they understood that the existence of ERT was a fundamental issue of democracy. (Personal communication, July 4, 2013)

Farantaki noted that in just three weeks following the shutdown, ERT3's Facebook page grew sixfold, noting that the protest movement grew rapidly via social media. This happened for two reasons, in her view: due to the threat the public felt that democracy was coming under attack, and also due to the attention ERT's shutdown garnered overseas, particularly in Europe, where

other public broadcasters began to worry that they might be next. Providing another example of social and new media's role in the protest movement, Farantaki noted that ERT3 had issued a call to the public to like its YouTube channel, in order to surpass 1,000 followers, which would then grant ERT3 the ability to begin streaming live video. As Farantaki stated, this occurred "within 26 minutes" (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

The occupied ERT featured programming which more than likely would never have been broadcast on the official ERT, including roundtables with activists, bloggers, representatives of worker-run collectives, economists presenting alternatives to the policies of austerity, documentaries about social and activist causes (such as the Skouries movement), and live newscasts which, however, were freed of official editorial oversight. As Chatzistefanou noted in chapter 5, his crowdfunded documentary about the crisis and the politics of austerity, *Debtocracy*, was screened on "ERT Open," as the protest broadcaster began to be known. Farantaki described the programming which was being aired on the occupied ERT as focusing not just on news and updates about ERT's shutdown, but also on "workers in Greece and elsewhere and the problems they face." Farantaki stated her view that the citizens of Thessaloniki embraced the occupied ERT3, "visiting the studios…getting to know us," adding that "we exchange perspectives as to what is happening, what was happening previously, to what extent ERT had the social character that it should have had and to what extent we as the workers of ERT are accomplishing this now" (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

For Farantaki, the true reason for ERT's shutdown was not the austerity measures cited by the government and the need to trim the state's payroll. It was instead another instance of "diaploki." Farantaki noted that at the time of ERT's closure, a bidding process was underway

for the entity that would be granted the right to operate a nationwide network of transmitters for digital television. ERT would have been an applicant in this bidding process, but by shutting down ERT, the only remaining bidder was DIGEA, jointly owned by Greece's six largest private television channels. In other words according to Farantaki, "the television spectrum nationwide is being turned over to a private company" (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

Farantaki stated that "…for us, this is not a strike broadcast, nor do we consider ourselves squatters. We continued performing our jobs…because we are calling into doubt the executive decree and the joint ministerial decision which followed [which dissolved ERT]." She further noted that the issue had a swift political impact, noting that DIMAR dropped out of the governing coalition in opposition to the shutdown (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

Aside from the network of transmitters which ERT's workers were able to keep on the air, ERT Open was broadcast on the internet as well, with the assistance of *The Press Project*. Efimeros stated the three reasons why *The Press Project* began to transmit ERT online:

> First of all it was because despite the fact that ERT was a propaganda tool, that did not mean that it should be silenced. That was not the solution. Second, because ERT proved itself…broadcasting documentaries about Skouries, the memorandum agreements, the hospitals and theaters which are shutting down, roundtable discussions we had never seen before on television, things we discussed only on Twitter and Facebook and never within the official public sphere. The third reason was because we could. It was a way of proving that we could transmit ERT's signal. This was significant for us because…we wanted to explain to a 60-year old that the internet isn't something scary, it's simply another means of transmitting a signal. (Personal communication, July 18, 2013)

Efimeros noted that *The Press Project* reached out to ERT's engineers almost immediately after the shutdown, and was able to keep the station's signal on the air in the crucial first few days after the official closure. This quick action, in Efimeros' view, was able to prevent (up until that point, as this ultimately occurred on November 7, 2013) a riot police invasion of ERT's main

headquarters. Efimeros stated that this possibility had been foreseen and five redundant systems of webcasting ERT were installed and the building was wired with cameras, so that any police invasion and arrests would be transmitted to the outside world, noting the significance this would have in shaping public opinion. A decision was also made to make ERT's live stream freely available, with an embed code being provided, instead of *The Press Project* maintaining exclusivity. Efimeros stated his view that this was not something that citizen journalists would have been able to accomplish on their own and that *The Press Project* had the necessary means and infrastructure to handle such a task (personal communication, July 18, 2013).

Vasilis Vasilopoulos, the Director of ERT's Multimedia Department, shared his opinion that ERT had been shut down "because it did not operate as propagandistically as the government desired," adding that during the period in question, "opposition rhetoric was fully dominant in the public discourse." Vasilopoulos added that social media enabled the news of ERT's closure to easily go viral, with the public turning to social media because "the traditional media supported the government," noting that while ERT was not popular or beloved, "its institutional role became understood." According to Vasilopoulos, "when ERT was shut down it had 12,000 likes on Facebook and when it reopened [in May 2015] it had 140,000, with visits from 110,000 active accounts per week." Vasilopoulos further noted that ERT's Facebook timeline from the period that it was shutdown "has been saved" (personal communication, August 22, 2017).

Vasilopoulos highlighted the significance on what was aired on ERT Open, including full news programming, documentaries that were offered by their producers copyright-free, and coverage of the Skouries movement as well as causes such as that of laid off cleaning women from the Ministry of Finance who had begun camping outside the Ministry building in protest,

and that of laid off workers from the Coca-Cola Hellenic Bottling Company. Vasilopoulos stated that he had produced and hosted a televised roundtable with prominent bloggers, many of whom had previously been known only by their pseudonyms. In Vasilopoulos' words, "everyone was invited to our studios, and not just for one hour" (personal communication, August 22, 2017).

Nevertheless, the reestablished ERT, in Vasilopoulos' view, "…has not managed to become a public broadcaster in the ideal sense of the term…but it is not a state broadcaster," explaining that while the government still heavily influences ERT's news content, this does not reflect all of ERT's staff or producers, while it is still legally obligated to provide airtime to all parties represented in parliament (personal communication, August 22, 2017).

A lasting legacy of the protest period is "ERT Open," which remains on the air in Athens as a union-run radio station. As stated by Vasilopoulos, it is managed by administrative and technical staff of ERT and "provides an alternative voice" (personal communication, August 22, 2017). Tolios describes this as "the greatest achievement [of the protest movement] and…this was embraced by pretty much every party, every political organization of the left spectrum…and by grassroots movements in general" (personal communication, February 22, 2017).

7.8 – New Media Outlets Formed during the Crisis

7.8.1 – Introduction

During the period being studied, a number of new media initiatives, both print-based and online, were formulated. Some of these organizations will be introduced, highlighting their usage of social and new media tools and their content.

7.8.2 – Alterthess

According to Lefteris Arvanitis, co-founder and journalist at *alterthess.gr,* the site is a collective which was founded with other journalists and which is based in Thessaloniki. Consisting of five main writers in addition to collaborators, Arvanitis notes that there is "no boss" within the organization. Arvanitis, who had worked at the Thessaloniki-based newspaper *Macedonia*, described himself as "among the first journalists to be fired" as a result of the economic crisis, working at a few other websites and publications before establishing *Alterthess* in 2010 (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

As stated by Arvanitis, the original idea was to establish a newspaper, but this was financially prohibitive. Among the founding members were journalists "who then worked in traditional media, but who did not have the freedom to write exactly what they wanted and were seeking other collaborations." One of the main goals of *Alterthess* was to provide coverage of activist actions and activities, noting that "there was a very large gap in the news coverage about [social] movements…at the time, there was no other website aside from *Indymedia* which covered this segment of the political spectrum" (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

According to Arvanitis, *Alterthess* is distinct in three ways. First, by "providing censored news…stories that are important but which had no place in the pages of a traditional newspaper…due to political choice," secondly via its immediacy, noting that the Thessaloniki offices of Greece's national television stations had been shut down due to the crisis, and third distinction being "journalism with a perspective," as an alternative to the mainstream media. However, and despite the *Alterthess* name, Arvanitis disagrees with the "alternative" label,

presenting the outlet as "professional, with limited resources," and claiming that their website attracted more visitors than the city's newspapers (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

In relation to social and new media, Arvanitis noted that *Alterthess* attempts to be entirely multimedia, "…using all of the tools we have at our disposal...seeing the entire technological aspect as a unified whole. In a story we'll use text, audio, video, and Twitter, not just to disseminate it, but to construct the story." *Alterthess* was more active on Twitter than on Facebook according to Arvanitis, noting that the Twitter community plays a role in providing newsworthy information to the site. Arvanitis added that 80 percent of the site's visits originate from Twitter and Facebook, and that the audience is "broadly on the left and tech literate." Finally, Arvanitis highlighted the relationship *Alterthess* has cultivated with its audience, noting that the site had to "turn to a different economic model" and has sought funding from the audience directly (personal communication, July 4, 2013).

7.8.3 – Hot Doc Magazine

The journalist who has perhaps received the most attention in Greece during the years of the economic crisis is journalist Kostas Vaxevanis, publisher of the investigative *Hot Doc* magazine and the *koutipandoras.gr* online portal[54] (and later the *Documento* weekly newspaper). With a long career as a journalist and a producer of investigative news programs on television, including a longtime series which aired on ERT, Vaxevanis garnered international attention in October 2012, when he was arrested[55] for the publication of the so-called "Lagarde List," named after the Managing Director of the IMF, Christine Lagarde. The list contained the names of approximately 2,000 alleged Greek tax evaders with Swiss bank accounts, and Vaxevanis faced

[54] See http://www.hotdoc.gr and http://www.koutipandoras.gr.
[55] See https://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-nevradakis/greek-journalist-arrested_b_2030940.html and https://www.huffingtonpost.com/michael-nevradakis/an-interview-with-kostas-_b_2126780.html.

two trials on charges of violating privacy laws stemming from the publication of the list, being acquitted on both occasions. *Hot Doc* was first published in April 2012, and was described by Vaxevanis as "the biggest Greek investigative and opinion magazine, with a circulation of approximately 25,000 copies [weekly]" (personal communication, March 6, 2013).

According to Vaxevanis, he sought to restore the role of the fourth estate through the publication of the magazine, which boasted the slogan "the truth as it is, journalism as it's supposed to be." Vaxevanis described *Hot Doc* as an investigative magazine, publishing stories based on hard evidence, and credited this content for its success. According to Vaxevanis, most of the magazine's readers were between the ages of 25 and 40, describing this demographic as the "audience of the internet, the audience which for decades has cast into doubt television and the traditional media" (personal communication, March 6, 2013).

Regarding his arrest following the publication of the "Lagarde List," Vaxevanis stated that it would not have been known in Greece were it not for social media, from which foreign media quickly picked up the story. Vaxevanis described the almost immediate creation of a Facebook page named "Free Vaxevanis," which he claimed attracted 75,000 likes within an hour, while the news of Vaxevanis' arrest initially became publicly known via a tweet[56] he managed to send out moments before his arrest and which had thousands of retweets within the first hour. According to Vaxevanis, this was how foreign media outlets learned of the arrest at the same time that the Greek media "did not say a word" (personal communication, March 6, 2013). According to Chatzistefanou, this was because "the same economic elite that support the government…are afraid and are very aggressive against journalists who want to express different opinions. We had the example of [Kostas] Vaxevanis, who brought up the Lagarde List"

[56] See https://twitter.com/kostasvaxevanis/status/262479187972079616.

(personal communication, June 26, 2013). Further illustrating such "diaploki," Vaxevanis noted that the *Ta Nea* newspaper, owned by a prominent oligarch, later republished his list with more detail, but no legal action was taken against the paper (personal communication, March 6, 2013).

In Vaxevanis' view, "*Hot Doc* would not exist if social media didn't exist…in order for the news that we publish in our magazine to be learned by a much wider audience than those who read the magazine itself." Vaxevanis noted that the magazine, which uses Facebook and Twitter as well as the *koutipandoras.gr* portal, often "goes viral" on social media, especially when scandals are revealed. Vaxevanis also described his plans to launch a web radio station, describing this as a way to bypass the closed airwaves, while feeding his programming via the internet to regional radio stations" (personal communication, March 6, 2017).

7.8.4 – Okeanews

Olivier Drot, editor of the French-language *Okeanews.fr* website, which features news and reporting from Greece, explained why he decided to launch this website: having visited Greece as a high school student and later as a tourist, he grew interested in the country and:

> …decided to come back the year after, for one month. It was in 2010 and I lived one month…with Greek people all the time…I wanted to really live it from inside. It was just the start of the [crisis]…I decided to come back and live here…I took this decision in 2011, during the "Occupy Athens" movement…I remember that I was crying when I saw what happened on end of June 2011…because there was tear gas everywhere. A friend of mine was saying that…our government declared war on us. I could see in the mainstream media in France, because I was watching what they were saying, that it was completely different from what my friends were saying to me. So I decided to talk about it and it started like this and now I have the blog…I wanted to make really a small media, independent media to talk about all of this. (Personal communication, May 24, 2013)

Drot described the site's contents as follows:

> I started just by explaining the demonstrations, the austerity measures, by explaining what impact [they have] on Greek society. I wanted also to fight against some myths, that Greeks are lazy, they deserve all of this that is happening. I was really angry about this

> because my friends were paying taxes, there was a cut in their salaries, so I wanted to explain what really it was. (Personal communication, May 24, 2013)

Drot noted the site's success in making the Skouries movement known to France, where it had not previously been recorded, adding that his audience includes both visitors from France and French expatriates residing in Greece. Finally, regarding the presence of *Okeanews* on social media, Drot stated that "Facebook is more to publish the content, Twitter is more to follow, to share, to cover when there is a demonstration, something is happening somewhere and we have to share it. I participate in the #rbnews hashtag" (personal communication, May 24, 2013).

7.8.5 – Omnia TV

Omnia TV[57] can be described as a video-oriented alternative news portal. Editor Antonis Dimopoulos described the site's beginnings, with efforts having started during the period of the December 2008 riots. As stated by Dimopoulos, "[w]e are a team of people which got to know each other on the internet and we decided to launch and develop something which did not exist in Greece at the time, a web TV station. According to Dimopoulos, the initial conceptualization of Omnia TV was based on the principle of openness:

> The thinking behind this effort was for it to be open, for anyone to be able to come here and prepare a show…where anyone could express what they want, to write their own news or to share their opinions…Omnia TV isn't exclusively us. It is whoever comes in, whoever writes, whoever produces a show… (Personal communication, July 10, 2013)

Dimopoulos stated that this concept was still an uphill battle for Omnia TV, noting that many members of the public were not used to a medium such as this, where they could log in and create their own content. Nevertheless, Dimopoulos described Omnia TV as being "on an upward trajectory." According to Dimopoulos, social media was used by Omnia TV mostly for the purposes of dissemination, with a presence on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Google+,

[57] See https://www.omniatv.com.

with Twitter and YouTube used the most, citing Twitter's immediacy. Dimopoulos added that "most if not all of us participate in the #rbnews hashtag." Finally, Dimopoulos also described efforts to launch "a joint effort with media such as Radiobubble, mindthecam, *Indymedia*, to slowly come together as organizations…this became possible within social media and we have started to come together despite our differences…to develop a united voice of the media from below" (personal communication, July 10, 2013).

7.8.6 – Protagon

Founded in 2010 by prominent journalist (and current leader of the To Potami political party) Stavros Theodorakis, with a long career in Greek television and the press, *protagon.gr* is described by its editor, Kostas Giannakidis, "as a site which primarily features opinion pieces and which targets Greece's opinion leaders…which doesn't chase news or report on everything happening in Greece or the world, but which explains why something occurred, to analyze what's behind the story…" Giannakidis stated that the site is eponymous and that its concept is unique in relation to other media outlets in Greece (personal communication, April 5, 2013).

Christina Tachiaou, a journalist with *Protagon*, described the site's content: "What's most interesting about *Protagon* and a factor in its success is the fact that you can read everything…the opinion of anarchists…of SYRIZA, of [New Democracy], of PASOK…There is no line. All opinions are available and respected" (personal communication, February 23, 2013). With respect to the resonance of *Protagon* with its audience, Tachiaou stated:

> You can find *Protagon* everywhere...even if people agree or disagree. You can find many, many comments on our articles, and it's one of the sites that really contributes to the public dialogue…We also have articles by readers, the ones that we consider most

> interesting and with a subject that may interest more people. So yes, there is a dialogue and we also accept proposals by [readers]. (Personal communication, February 23, 2013)

Giannakidis added that *Protagon* attracted 65,000-70,000 unique users per day and was in the top five most influential media outlets in Greece (personal communication, April 5, 2013).

7.8.7 – Seleo.gr

Seleo.gr, a local news portal based in the city of Thessaloniki, was founded in 2009. According to journalist Christina Fotinaki, it is among the top three most visited websites of Thessaloniki and heavily emphasizes local news, with a focus on citizen-submitted content such as photographs. As stated by Fotinaki, "the issues that we will cover will most likely not interest a television channel." Interaction with the public via Facebook and Twitter was noted, with most of the portal's content shared via these two mediums. Fotinaki noted that the site was "rapidly growing" in popularity, adding that the site had a presence on YouTube and future plans to incorporate video into its reporting" (personal communication, July 5, 2013).

7.8.8 – The Press Project

Earlier in the chapter, the role of *The Press Project* in transmitting the signal of ERT Open on the internet after ERT had officially been shut down was presented. The site, however, operates as a news and opinion portal in its own right, in addition to featuring an online radio station and web TV programming. *The Press Project* also collaborates with *Wikileaks*.

According to Costas Efimeros, the editor and founder of *The Press Project*, the site was a product of the economic crisis and what was being said in the mainstream media, and actually began as a Twitter account in 2010, "based on the need to discuss the things which were not being discussed in Greece." After the initial Twitter account was founded, a website was created which eventually transformed into news portal operating with a newsroom. Efimeros emphasized

The Press Project's focus on investigative journalism at the intersection of citizen journalism, with a team of four journalists assigned to such work and a collaboration with the *Eleftherotypia* newspaper. Efimeros noted, however, that *The Press Project* determined that it wished to remain within the realm of professional journalism, producing a variety of content, including infographics, documentaries such as *Debtocracy*, and "unfiltered" journalism that a citizen would not be able to provide on their own (personal communication, July 18, 2013).

Efimeros stated that *The Press Project* started out averaging 5,000-6,000 visitors per day to its website, but as of 2013, was surpassing 400,000, rivaling major mainstream Greek news portals such as *in.gr*. In Efimeros' view, this popularity was largely based on major initiatives undertaken by *The Press Project*, such as its live streaming of ERT Open, as well as revelatory journalism, exposing such stories as whistleblower Edward Snowden's allegations that Greek diplomats were being spied upon. Social media played a major role in *The Press Project*'s efforts, particularly via two Twitter accounts: @tppfeed, which acts as a live newsroom feed, and @thepressproject, featuring commentary and satire (personal communication, July 18, 2013)

Notably though, *The Press Project* was backed by a technology company which produced and sold a content management system used by major publishers in Greece. Efimeros noted that this provided *The Press Project* with financial resources, in addition to technological resources which other online mediums did not have access to. These technological tools, according to Efimeros, enabled *The Press Project* to develop data mining tools such as "Circular" and "Search Lab," through which government documents and resources, as well as financial statements pertaining to Greek politicians, were available and searchable. Access to this data bolstered the investigative efforts of *The Press Project* (personal communication, July 18, 2013).

Notably, Efimeros stated that:

> We do not believe we are an alternative medium…other than being forced to be "alternative" to the major outlets. We are small because they are big…but we do not want to be considered an alternative medium, I want us to be a medium that the audience trusts for its daily news consumption. (Personal communication, July 18, 2013)

Efimeros also stated that he would like *The Press Project* to be a mainstream news source, believing that it was better than the others due to its investigative journalism, eponymous operation, crediting of photographers, and operation with an internal code of ethics. He added that, as a sign of its credibility, *The Press Project* had thus far been threatened with legal action on 13 occasions, but none of the cases went to court, because everything was cross-checked and verified (personal communication, July 18, 2013).

7.8.9 – Unfollow Magazine

Unfollow[58] is a monthly magazine which was founded in late 2011. The magazine is printed in a literary format and features long-form pieces, investigative journalism and analysis, as well as literature and non-news items. Augustine Zenakos, editor of *Unfollow*, had worked in the mainstream press, for the *To Vima* newspaper, but departed in 2010. Zenakos described his reason for departing: "I couldn't handle it anymore. The whole idea of how we worked had changed a lot because of the crisis." In Zenakos' words: "Our plan was to make a magazine that would be completely independent, which meant that it would have no funding, no background support from any source…Our plan was not to make an alternative medium. Our plan was to make an independent one" (personal communication, July 19, 2013).

Zenakos described the main pillars of *Unfollow*'s content:

> …the old media that we liked to read at one point were media that would dare have long stories, complicated stories, they would assume that the reader would put in the effort to

[58] See http://www.unfollow.com.gr.

> face a complicated issue and read it through, even if that would take 10 or 15 pages, even if that would take up quite a lot of time. Traditional media went away from that, whereas they were the ones that mostly had the capability to do it in the past. Also, this is a type of journalism that suits printed media quite a lot. On the internet, a lot of people get tired of reading really long things, attention spans are a lot shorter. One thing we wanted to do was to go back to that kind of journalism. (Personal communication, July 19, 2013)

Zenakos also noted *Unfollow*'s inclusion of combining journalistic and non-journalistic work:

> …this is in no sense new but it's been somehow reintroduced, the idea that a magazine is something that keeps you company through a certain amount of time, so it doesn't only go after the expediency of what is now politically relevant…but also something that builds up your general attitude to things. So publishing literature, for example, alongside journalism, to us makes that kind of sense. (Personal communication, July 19, 2013)

In addition, Zenakos stated *Unfollow*'s efforts to combine theoretical work with investigative journalism. Using the issue of "diaploki" as an example, he explained how *Unfollow* could publish an article which combines the historical background of the phenomenon with the reporting of hard facts and the naming of specific figures.

According to Zenakos, this brand of journalism had gotten *Unfollow* in legal trouble, citing two lawsuits which had been filed against the magazine by prominent businessman Dimitris Melissanidis following investigative articles which were published by the magazine which revealed allegations of smuggling, forgery, and tax evasion on the part of Melissanidis, who was very close to then-Prime Minister Antonis Samaras. For Zenakos, this was a battle against the system of "diaploki": "[t]he mainstream press is flooded with flattering portraits of this guy, the big businessman, the big success story, he is also associated with a football team…and so now you have the sports press also praising this guy." Zenakos added that there was a very real threat of being sued into extinction:

> We're quite confident that our stories are well-documented and I think that he's going to have no luck in court, but we are a small magazine, we're perhaps 20 people in total…

> There's no protection in any kind of institutionalized form if you want to do this kind of journalism in this country. (Personal communication, July 19, 2013)

Zenakos noted that social media was a means for making *Unfollow*'s work known, as the magazine "never had money to do traditional advertising." However, Zenakos explained differences in the way the magazine approached online media: "…we didn't make the mistake that many traditional media made…We know the different nature of the two things, and what we put on the internet is not our printed material. It's part of it, but we also…write directly for the internet." According to Zenakos, *Unfollow* maintained a presence on Facebook and Twitter and tried to "engage in a kind of dialogue" but did not have the luxury of responding to dozens of comments, which meant that "mostly we try to do things that would invite people to discuss among themselves" (personal communication, July 19, 2013).

Finally, Zenakos discussed the launch of *Unfollow*'s English-language online edition, *Borderline Reports*, which aimed to provide the information and context that Zenakos felt was frequently missing from reports provided by foreign correspondents and fixers reporting from Athens (personal communication, July 19, 2013).

7.8.10 – Vmedia.gr

Vmedia.gr is a web TV station and online alternative news portal which was founded in late 2012. According to Christos Kotsireas, a journalist with *Vmedia.gr*, the idea behind developing the site was "for the public to have the ability to receive news…which is not reported at this time by the hegemonic media outlets…and via our web channel, to present people and voices who will not easily be heard on the hegemonic media." These guests included university professors and citizen journalists, while other programming included news analysis programs, shows on music and the environment, and a satirical program.

Social and new media played a significant role in *Vmedia.gr*'s programming and operations. Noting that the public had a "thirst for alternative news and information," Kotsireas described *Vmedia.gr*'s web TV programming as mostly live, attracting an audience as large as 60,000 viewers for significant live events. Kotsireas mentioned the site's active presence on Facebook, a blog, and a chat feature which is active during live programming. Approximately 10 people were involved in *Vmedia.gr*'s efforts in total (personal communication, July 2, 2013).

Kotsireas mentioned *vMedia.gr*'s interest in participating in a common platform (mentioned previously in the subsection about Omnia TV) which would bring together all of the media collectives, "in order to have better penetration within society." In Kotsireas' view, social media "are the future battleground, but we can't rely solely on that belief. The most important thing is for online clicktivism to become offline action and participation in collective initiatives," stating that this was a goal of *Vmedia.gr* (personal communication, July 2, 2013).

7.9 – Survey Results: Views on Social Media and the Mass Media

The results of the electronic survey questionnaire provide insights into perceptions which exist regarding the impact of social and new media upon the overall media sphere, the mass media's credibility crisis and credibility of the social and new media as a source of news and information, the impact of social and new media in making important incidents and events such as the "Indignants" movement or the arrest of journalist Kostas Vaxevanis known to a wider public, and the usage of social and new media tools by journalists.

Respondents, when asked whether they used social media for the purposes of getting news and information, widely answered "yes." The internet more broadly was cited as the most-used source of news and information for almost three-fourths of respondents, including almost

all of the elected officials from the European Parliament, but only three-fifths of newspaper editors, likely revealing their favoritism towards print. Newspapers were the second most popular primary source of news and information among respondents, far below the popularity of the internet, while television and radio barely registered. Nearly half of respondents stated that they had never used social media to communicate with a mainstream media outlet. Amongst the usage of "non-traditional" media, just over half of the respondents stated that they regularly read alternative print media, and almost half listened to internet radio.

The next set of responses pertains to trustworthiness and credibility. The impact of social and new media in the decline in popularity of the mainstream media was rated as fairly large, at found to be significant overall, with the highest response coming from representatives of civil society organizations, who provided an overwhelmingly positive response, and the lowest from editors of newspapers, with a slightly positive response. The trustworthiness of television as a source of news and information was ranked at very low levels, with a still lower ranking provided by civil society representatives, and the highest, in relative terms, by newspaper editors, perhaps reflecting a mass media bias. However, radio, newspapers, and magazines were all ranked negatively by respondents in terms of their trustworthiness as sources of news and information, with the lowest levels of trust across the board provided by civil society representatives and the highest by newspaper editors, once more belying a likely bias towards mainstream media outlets. The highest overall ranking was received by the internet, whose trustworthiness as a source of news and information was nevertheless viewed slightly negatively. Civil society representatives ranked the internet slightly positively in this regard, as did elected

representatives (3.14), while newspaper editors leaned negative, further revealing a likely bias in favor of "traditional" forms of mass media.

Overall, respondents overwhelmingly believed that the mainstream media in Greece were suffering from a credibility crisis. This included all civil society respondents and almost all newspaper editors who responded. Amongst those who answered "yes" to the previous question, the credibility crisis was rated as "severe," with results almost even across the three populations. When asked if they believed the internet was considered to be a more credible source of news and information for the majority of people in Greece, a plurality answered "yes," including a majority of members of the European Parliament who responded. As to whether respondents believed if the internet was used more often as a source of news and information as compared to the mainstream media by the majority of Greeks, a majority answered "yes," while only approximately one quarter of respondents answered "no." Overall, respondents believed that almost half of the news consumed by the average Greek citizen came from online sources. The age group believed by respondents to be the most reliant upon the internet and social media for news and information was the 25-34 bracket, while for reliance upon mainstream media, the 55-64 and 65+ age groups combined for almost all responses, reflecting an evident digital divide among generations.

The next set of responses is related to the relationship of the mass media with social and new media. The online and social media presence of Greece's mainstream media outlets was ranked slightly negatively by respondents overall, with civil society representatives providing the most negative result and newspaper editors—once again likely to be biased—with a slightly positive view. Similarly, the level of integration of new media tools by mainstream media outlets

was ranked marginally negative, with members of the European Parliament providing a positive outlook. When asked whether they believed Greece's mainstream media outlets had reacted positively or negatively to the popularity of social and new media, a slightly negative score was recorded, with a particularly low score recorded for representatives of civil society groups. Newspaper editors were slightly negative, while members of the European Parliament were the only population to provide a slightly positive score. A presence on social media also was not believed to have helped the credibility of mainstream media outlets, with a small majority of respondents answering "no" and less than a quarter of respondents answering "yes." The fluency of journalists with social and new media tools was also ranked slightly poor by respondents. Interestingly, newspaper editors ranked themselves close to the (slightly negative) average, while the lowest score was provided by civil society representatives and the highest, and only slightly positive score, provided by elected representatives. The overall impact of social media on the quality of Greek journalism was viewed as fairly significant, while civil society representatives were neutral on this account. The impact of social media on the quality of journalism was nevertheless rated as slightly negative, with civil society representatives once again remaining neutral and the other two populations providing a slightly negative score. When asked whether they believed if the mainstream media and the news coverage they provide had driven the public to search for alternative sources of news online, a very positive score was provided across all three populations, with civil society representatives providing the highest ranking of all.

The next group of questions asked respondents to gauge the impact of social and new media in exposing various issues to the public. Most agreed that social and mew media did have a significant role in exposing issues to the public, including the killing of Alexandros

Grigoropoulos, the "Indignants" protest movement, the arrest of blogger Geron Pastitsios, the arrest of journalist Kostas Vaxevanis, the Skouries mining controversy, the shootings of migrant farm workers in Manolada, the shutdown of ERT, the murder of rapper Pavlos Fyssas, and the arrests and trial of members of Golden Dawn. In most instances, representatives of civil society organizations ascribed the highest levels of impact for the aforementioned issues, though newspaper editors attributed a higher level of social media impact on the story of the arrest of blogger Geron Pastitsios, and members of the European Parliament ascribed the highest level of social media impact to the story of the Golden Dawn arrests.

In looking at the credibility of the coverage found on social and new media as compared to the social media for aforementioned issues and whether the coverage online was more credible, slight majorities answered "yes" for the Skouries mining controversy and for the movement of the "Indignants" and for the shutdown of ERT; slightly less than half of respondents answered "yes" for the arrest of Kostas Vaxevanis, the killing of Alexandros Grigoropoulos, the Manolada shootings, the murder of Pavlos Fyssas, and the arrest of Geron Pastitsios, and approximately one-third answered "yes" for the Golden Dawn arrests.

A final set of results pertains to the questionnaire which was exclusively provided to newspaper editors. A majority of respondents stated that their newspaper utilized at least one social or new media tool, with Facebook and online video being the most used, followed by Twitter, user comments, and an RSS feed. Amongst the editors themselves, Twitter was the most frequently used social media tool, followed by Facebook. Overall, Twitter was the most-used social media tool by a plurality journalists for the purposes of their journalistic work, followed

again by Facebook. Most newspapers were said to maintain a dedicated staff exclusively for their social media and online presence.

Social media was gauged as having a fairly notable impact in terms of significance and even more so in terms of quality, for the quality of the journalism at the editors' newspapers. The impact of social and new media on the editors' ability to perform their jobs was also viewed as significant, while a somewhat positive impact was evident. Interestingly, almost all respondents stated that their newspaper *did not* require them to maintain a social media presence, with none answering "yes." Most editors also stated that they interacted with their readers via social media, and half did not believe that the newspaper where they were employed was suffering from a credibility crisis. In looking at the online tools used by the newspaper where the editors are employed, the most popular tool was an online .pdf edition of the newspaper, followed by exclusive online content, an online newsletter, and online video.

In looking at their newspapers' impact on the Greek public sphere and public discourse in Greece, a fair amount of significance was recorded, as well as a highly positive impact, once more reflecting a likely bias in favor of their own outlets and mass media more broadly on the part of the editors themselves. Specifically looking at their newspapers' online presence, the significance of their impact on public discourse was viewed as slightly significant and somewhat positive. The overall quality of their newspapers' online and social media presence was viewed neutrally. The impact of the online presence of the editors' newspapers upon political discourse and the political sphere in Greece was rated slightly significantly and somewhat more positively, while the popularity and reach of the newspapers' online and social media presence was, in turn, ranked as slightly insignificant.

Regarding a key issue for journalists, self-censorship, almost all respondents stated that it was or probably was common in Greek journalism today (with no journalists answering "no"), while social and new media was not found to have had a very significant impact in perpetuating this practice. Most respondents also stated that they considered social and new media an important means of generating visitors and readers for their paper, while the editors estimated that almost half of their page views for the website of their newspapers originated, on average, from social media postings.

Finally, the potential future significance of social media and new media upon the journalistic realm in Greece was ranked very highly by journalists, while the quality of this impact was expected to be lower, but still positive.

Overall, what the above results seem to be indicating is a general sense amongst journalists and editors that the online presence of mainstream media outlets in Greece—including their own—was satisfactory at best. Social and new media's role in spreading the news about significant incidents and events such as the ERT shutdown, the "Indignants" movement, or the arrest of journalist Kostas Vaxevanis, was noted, with no ranking across any specific incident or event falling below 3.00 overall or among any of the three populations surveyed, even though respondents were divided regarding the credibility of the reporting and news found online about these incidents and events. Perhaps most significantly, the credibility crisis of the mass media—and television in particular—seemed to be confirmed, while the internet and social media were used most often as a source of news and information, and broadly viewed as being the most popular single source of news and information within Greek society today.

7.10 – DISCUSSION

Many and varied responses were provided by the interviewees regarding the overall impact of social and new media on the incumbent media outlets in Greece. Some respondents highlighted social media's influence on the mainstream media's news content, others highlighted a slow response or paralysis on the part of the major media outlets in adapting to these new technologies. The interviewees also commented on the issue of online credibility, highlighting the audience's search for "truth," cord-cutting, and usage of social media as a second screen.

For Mangiriadis, news stories that are trending on social media impacted the newsroom at the outlet where he was employed, Mega Channel:

> …there are many times in our meetings before we go on the nightly news, that we discuss issues that are coming up via the social media, and we are wondering whether we should include that on the nightly news, either as an issue or what's going on with the discussion inside the social media. (Personal communication, July 23, 2013)

Zenakos highlighted the immense pressure that mainstream media have felt when stories such as incidences of police violence were exposed on social media: "The fact that there were a lot of people, non-professional journalists, that recorded what was happening on the street and this material became available to a wide number of people…put quite a lot of pressure on the media" (personal communication, July 19, 2013). Karvounopoulos stated that some newspapers abandoned speed and began providing detailed analysis, while other newspapers went in the opposite direction, publishing large photos and short pieces (personal communication, June 28, 2013). Apostolopoulos argues that television has abandoned its search for mass audiences in favor of providing program targeting niche audiences (personal communication, May 24, 2013).

Dimitrakopoulou cites paralysis on the part of the mainstream media, stating that they reacted: "[w]ith great technophobia. It was very apparent that traditional media were paralyzed

with the advent of new media, and journalists unions were also very reluctant in incorporating the new media into their professional life," adding that they feared that social media would steal their jobs (personal communication, July 5, 2013). Paralysis was also cited by Giannis Kessopoulos, founder and editor of *thinkfree.gr*, noting that the newspapers of Thessaloniki "missed the boat completely" as none launched a local news portal (personal communication, April 3, 2013). Hrisos argued that "[t]hey try to become part of the game, but it seems that it is impossible for them to participate, because it's a totally different mentality…mainstream media just don't want to have a dialogue with the society" (personal communication, July 2, 2013).

Other interviewees cited the reproduction of the mainstream media in the online sphere. Moutsatsou stated: "[the mass media] haven't learned their lesson, haven't understood, they're still reproducing propaganda online (personal communication, February 9, 2013). Vaxevanis expressed his view that "when the media oligarchs understood that they were losing the game and that the game is played on the internet, instead of looking after their websites…they created and pay, along with businesspeople, 'yellow blogs'" in order to attack opponents (personal communication, March 6, 2013). Kotsireas observed "…the following oxymoronic situation can be observed: someone who might no longer watch Mega Channel will read *Protagon* [owned by former Mega Channel journalist Stavros Theodorakis], or will turn off Skai but will visit the news portal owned by Nikos Evaggelatos [at the time a presenter on Skai TV], and will think that he is better informed and 'sticking it' to the mainstream media" (personal communication, July 2, 2013). This was highlighted by Baltzis, who noted that many mainstream media personalities have set up their own portals (personal communication, February 23, 2013).

There was also a debate amongst those interviewed regarding whether social and new media, and online sources more broadly, could be considered more credible than mainstream offline media. Zenakos questioned how online credibility could be measured while noting that the audience that has shifted online could be reading anything: "[t]here's no data that you can base assumptions on…How many people go online just to visit traditional media portals?… Or even interact with the kind of blogs that are on the far right or somehow connected to Golden Dawn?" Zenakos added that "…20,000 people reading something on the internet sounds like a healthy number, but if you think about it, it's not that big a number really, it's not something that you could use as indicative of what people believe" (personal communication, July 19, 2013).

Other interviewees cited a search for an alternative on the part of the audience. As described by Theodoridis, "If you look at the quality of news being provided in Greek television, I mean people were just waiting for an alternative" (personal communication, January 27, 2017), while in the words of Christina Papadopoulou, "I believe that you can always find the truth online, the truth you can't find on the newscasts of Mega Channel or Antenna TV…because you can find all perspectives online" (personal communication, February 2, 2014). Zoe Georganta, professor of applied econometrics and productivity at the University of Macedonia, stated that "A lot of people don't listen to Greek TV, especially nowadays, because they all lie…especially the major channels. [Citizens] try to get their political information…from blogs and from what is discussed over the internet" (personal communication, July 7, 2013). Kranidiotis stated his view that online media were not considered more credible by the public, but "the public is now more aware, and because it has more opportunities to get informed, it searches more deeply," adding that "instead of opening their television in the morning, quite often they open their computers"

(personal communication, December 6, 2013). Vasilopoulos pessimistically warned, however, that "the online citizen cannot sort out what is true, documented information. He considers all of the information that is online accurate" (personal communication, June 5, 2013).

Finally, a merging of online and offline media consumption was also observed, via the usage of social media platforms as a "second screen." Adamidis notes that "a very large percentage of comments that are written on Twitter in particular, and also Facebook, have to do with things broadcast on television" (personal communication, April 10, 2013), while Farmakis jokes that "When there is a strike of journalists…and there are no news bulletins and no newspapers circulating, then the debate in social media is empty, as if people do not have what to do or what to discuss when there is no news on TV" (personal communication, April 15, 2013).

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.1 – RQ1: How have social and new media altered or impacted the public sphere and civil society in Greece?

In looking at how (and if) social and new media have altered or impacted the public sphere and civil society in Greece, the following indicators could be used as a measure: a broadening of public discourse or an opening of public discourse to new or previously marginalized voices; a reduction or elimination of clientelism, patronage, and diaploki; increased usage of social and new media for matters of public interest and concern; the formation of new civil society organizations; the increased visibility of existing civil society organizations; the formation of new citizens' movements, an increase in volunteerism; increased citizen involvement in public affairs; and an overall increased awareness of civil society.

The general consensus revealed from the individual interviews conducted for this study is that civil society has been bolstered during the years being studied as part of this project (2011-2017). This is evident through the establishment of many new civil society initiatives during this period, as well as the increased visibility these organizations enjoyed within Greek society. Furthermore, many of these new civil society organizations could be said to have incorporated social and new media to a significant extent. In chapter 5, organizations and initiatives such as the "Atenistas," "Edosa Fakelaki," "*enallaktikos.gr*," "HumanGrid," "Illegal Signs," the Metropolitan Community Clinic of Ellinikon, "Omikron Project," "SynAthina," the Time Bank of Athens and Syntagma Square, and "Save Greek Water" were presented. Many of these initiatives were either based exclusively or mostly on the internet ("*enallaktikos.gr*," "Edosa Fakelaki," "Illegal Signs," "HumanGrid," "Omikron Project"), or maintained a significant online

presence that was a major component of the group's overall activity or an important means of communication between the organization and society at large.

To an extent, the same could be said about the broader interventions into the Greek public sphere which were presented in chapter 5. Various boycotts, such as #xa_advertising and #blood_strawberries, were entirely based on the internet. Crowdfunding for Aris Chatzistefanou's documentaries also took place online. Satire and parody as interventions in the public sphere and political discourse, such as in the case of "I Am Hellene," also took place online, utilizing new media. In addition, e-government initiatives and platforms were also presented, which sought to provide an online citizens' platform for communicating with the government and public services while fostering greater transparency and accountability.

From a "real life" point of view, I can personally attest, through my experience in Greece performing research between 2012 and 2017, that the physical public sphere as traditionally epitomized by the "kafeneio," and as epitomized in its modern form as Greece's present-day "café culture," is alive and well. The existence of these spaces is inextricably linked to a common cultural trait of the Greeks, who in large part greatly enjoy discussing politics and political issues. Indeed, my own experience has demonstrated to me that political conversation is almost unavoidable, regardless of location, sociopolitical status, or demographic. Greeks are opinionated and love to express their opinions, and present-day Greek cafés are a space where such discussion and debate takes place. It should come as no surprise that for years, Radiobubble operated out of a centrally-located café, merging three distinct spheres: its radio broadcasts, the online world which Radiobubble was intimately connected to via its social media activity and news reporting, and the physical space within the café itself. More broadly, I can attest that the

vast majority of cafés in Greece provide free, unrestricted wireless high-speed internet access, not just in urban areas but also in smaller towns, villages, and islands. The same is true of most other public spaces in Greece, including squares and plazas, airports, bus terminals, restaurants, many places of business, and even automatic teller machines. In turn, public squares in Greece often are the location of many such cafés, but have also served as spaces which have hosted major social movements, as best evidenced by the "Indignants" protests of 2011.

This may in turn relate to the immense popularity of Facebook, which was evident from the results of the 2016 Reuters Institute survey referenced in chapter 2, which found Facebook usage in Greece to be at among the highest levels in the world, including the use of Facebook as a source of news. Notably, the list of most-read news sites as recorded by the Reuters Institute survey included numerous mainstream portals, sites like *enikos.gr*, but also one of the last remaining prominent news blogs, "*Tromaktiko*." This may indicate, on the one hand, the reproduction of the existing hegemonic public sphere on the internet and in the social media sphere, and on the other hand, the existence of a parallel or alternative public sphere comprised of an audience that is interested in reading news blogs instead of visiting major news portals.

When politics is discussed, the problems of the Greek state and its institutions are frequently a topic of conversation. This sentiment was also reflected within this study. The general consensus amongst the interviewees was that Greece's public institutions are suffering from low levels of credibility. This finding was also evident in a number of recent surveys referenced in chapter 2, including the Kapa Research/*To Vima* survey and the DiaNEOsis survey, both of which measured attitudes towards major societal institutions and to civil society at large. Despite their existence and development in recent years, e-governance applications and

platforms were also infrequently used, as evidenced by the results of the OECD survey referenced in chapter 2. This lack of utilization of e-governance tools was also remarked upon by some interviewees, who questioned the implementation of such platforms within a society where there was no tradition of digital governance.

Another survey referenced in chapter 2 was conducted by "HumanGrid" and noted an increase in volunteerism in Greece during the years of the economic crisis, while the credibility of official non-governmental organizations remained low. This apprehension towards large non-governmental organizations was also mentioned by many of the interviewees in this study, and could be potentially attributed as being a byproduct of the low institutional credibility across the board in Greece, and the reputation that such organizations have earned as being close to a state that is widely considered to be corrupt. An increase, therefore, in volunteerism may reflect the growth in prominence of "unofficial" civil society groups, a development which was noted by interviewees and scholars such as Afouxenidis, who described the "unofficial" civil society sector as larger and more dynamic than the "official" civil society sector. Looking at organizations and initiatives which were presented in this study, groups such as the "Omikron Project," the Metropolitan Community Clinic of Ellinikon, and the Time Bank of Athens and Syntagma Square could all be considered representative examples of such "unofficial" groups, in the sense that they are (or were not, at the time of this study) legally registered entities. The same would also be true of Radiobubble, prior to its "official" formation as a collective.

Furthermore, Afouxenidis noted that many of these "unofficial" groups are themselves ephemeral, as is the volunteer activity that is often associated with them. In recent years in Greece, it could be said that there has been a change in the civil society "agenda," with the

growth in organizations—both official and unofficial—and volunteerism surrounding issues pertaining to refugees and migrants. A decline in one area of civil society might be counterbalanced by a spike in activity in another sector.

In examining the two illustrative examples which most closely related to civil society, Boroume and Radiobubble, it should first be noted that these organizations remain active as of 2018. Boroume, as noted by Theodoridis, has been growing each year since its inception, and it continues to be a visible part of the civil society landscape in Greece and one of the most recognized organizations of its kind in Greece. Notably though, Theodoridis noted that Boroume, which at one time had developed a reputation as having been "born" on Facebook, has since scaled down its social media activity, in particular Twitter. While social media tools may have played an extremely important role in helping Boroume launch, gain visibility, and attract volunteers, social media today seem to be playing a secondary role within the organization. It could perhaps be said that the organization has gained enough of a foothold within society in terms of recognition, financial resources and human resources, to not have to rely upon social media as much as in the earliest years of its existence.

Radiobubble, on the other hand and by all accounts, is not as visible as it was in the early part of the decade. This was confirmed in interviews with Paraskevopoulou in 2015 and Kounenakis in 2017. Radiobubble's physical space, its café in Exarchia, has shut down as of 2014, it has shifted the emphasis of its radio programming from news to music, and its once-active social media activity, as epitomized by the #rbnews hashtag which was once included in the Twitter feed of *The Guardian* during the Greek parliamentary elections of 2014, has been greatly scaled back, as stated by Paraskevopoulou and Kounenakis. Moreover, out of the two

prominent civil society initiatives which were borne out of Radiobubble, Hackademy is no longer active, while Tutorpool seems to be largely inactive as well. Furthermore, in an additional sign of ephemerality, some individuals who were at one time heavily active with the #rbnews hashtag on Twitter, such as Dora Oikonomides (@irategreek) and @doleross, have not been active on Twitter since 2016.

Notably though, most of the other groups and initiatives presented in Chapter 5, including the "Atenistas," "*enallaktikos.gr*," "HumanGrid," the Metropolitan Community Clinic of Ellinikon, "SynAthina," the Time Bank of Athens and Syntagma Square, and "Save Greek Water," remained operational as of 2018, maintaining an active presence online and via one or more social media outlets.

Not all such groups remained active, however. "Edosa Fakelaki" has seemingly been inactive since 2016, which is the last time a report regarding bribery seems to have been published on its website. The "grassroots map" of the "Omikron Project" has not been updated since 2014, while another Radiobubble initiative, #rbdata, does not seem to have been active online since 2015. The *Athensville* blog, credited with serving as the catalyst for the formation of the "Atenistas," has not been updated since 2016. Other initiatives not specifically covered by this project but which were formed during the period being studied also seem to have stalled or ceased their operations, such as "Mapping Racist Violence," (website inactive since 2015),[59] "Politeia 2.0" (Facebook page deleted), and "Teleia kai Pavla" (Facebook inactive since 2014).[60]

In looking at public sphere initiatives, it bears noting that there have been no notable boycott movements comparable to #xa_advertising and #blood_strawberries since 2013, nor any

[59] See http://map.crisis-scape.net.
[60] See https://www.facebook.com/teleiakaipavla.

crowdfunding initiatives that had the same reach and visibility as documentaries such as *Debtocracy,* which was screened throughout Greece and around the world, including broadcasts on major European television stations. It may well be that the public has grown accustomed to such initiatives and they no longer generate the interest that they did in the early part of the decade. Another possibility pertains to fatigue, which was indicated by Theodoridis in his 2017 follow-up interview, when specifically referring to Twitter he remarked "perhaps it completed its cycle. It never was as relevant in Greece as it was in the States I think," adding "they were these few people and they are the same and they are recycling themselves, so to say. And it's a very very small group of people and after a while people got tired I think." Looking at social media and civil society more broadly, Theodoridis stated: "I feel that other organizations started off believing that social media is really, really important. I don't have the feeling that they think it's that important any more (personal communication, January 27, 2017). With reference to the public sphere and political activity, Leventis observes that "the public doesn't trust anyone [and] is distancing itself from the political sphere" (personal communication, March 22, 2017).

What, therefore, does the Greek public sphere (or spheres) resemble? In Habermas' earlier conceptualization of the public sphere, he wrote about a society in which private organizations begin to assume greater public roles, while the state and public institutions increasingly begin to encroach upon the public sphere, and where rational-critical debate is supplanted by consumption and the messages delivered by the mass media, creating a "secondary realm of intimacy" (1962/1989: 161, 171, 175-176). While Habermas used the welfare state as an example, what has occurred in Greece in recent years is, on the one hand, an increasing privatization of institutional functions ranging from health care to helping the homeless, while at

the same time, the state has become *more* prominent in the lives of ordinary citizens through the austerity measures that it has implemented, such as tax increases and reductions to pensions. In turn, the media sphere may have simply shifted from broadcast media and the press to the online world, while the sources of news and information remain, to a significant degree, the same. At the same time, the increased "unofficial" civil society activity seen in Greece during the years of the economic crisis, as well as the development of many initiatives via social media, may more closely relate to Habermas' later conceptualization of the public sphere, one where the potential of "communicative action" can unearth the "rational potential intrinsic in everyday communication practices," occurring within a radical democratic framework which would seek to protect the "lifeworld"—the realm of personal relationships in society—from the "system" (1992: 442-444; Calhoun, 1992: 30). In the case of Greece, "communicative action" could be seen as referring to social and new media, the "radical democratic framework" could consist of collectively-run, "unofficial" groups and other entities with non-traditional hierarchies, and the "lifeworld" could refer to the network of personal relationships which has traditionally been one of the strongest aspects of Greek society, and which could be contained within what Habermas termed the "plebian public sphere," consisting of the culture of the common people—and one which is separate from the official or hegemonic public sphere (Habermas, 1992: 426-430). Zepou, for instance, noted the empowering role of informal language on social media in allowing the Greek public sphere and civil society to flourish during the years of the crisis. Habermas also made an allowance for the existence of multiple public spheres, a concept also promoted by Benhabib, who conceptualized such spheres as being able to come into existence at any time while existing autonomously. This in turn relates to Panagiotopoulou's observation that Greek

public spheres have often been ephemeral in nature, highlighting the movement of the "Indignants" as an example (2013: 453-454). It is likely that such ephemeral, alternative spheres developed in Greece during the years of the crisis, expressing different segments of society and differing ideological perspectives (such as the memorandum versus anti-memorandum divide), shifting or dissolving, however, as circumstances change. To this, we can also add Fraser's conceptualization of "subaltern counterpublics," which exist in a contested relationship with the dominant publics (1992: 128). It is not a stretch, for instance, to assume that the sphere which would, for instance, regularly visit a blog affiliated with Golden Dawn, would be significantly different and exist to a large degree autonomously from, for example, the sphere that would read *Indymedia* or listen to Radiobubble or participate in a civil society initiative assisting migrants.

In looking at civil society from a theoretical perspective, we can turn to Gramsci, who described civil society as the site where hegemony operates (Buttigieg, 1995: 27), but which he saw as a space which was up for grabs on the part of the citizenry, who could, via a "war of position," disable the coercive state apparatus (Ibid., 6-7). In the example of Greece, official societal institutions, including establishment non-governmental organizations, could be seen as comprising this coercive apparatus, while "unofficial" groups, including neighborhood committees, alternative currencies, time banks, and unregistered health clinics for the poor, could be seen as waging a battle on behalf of subaltern groups as part of the Gramscian "war of position." Such groups can change positions, dissolve and reappear as circumstances allow. As noted by Komninou, who is referenced in chapter 2, there has been a tradition in Greece of the state absorbing civil society initiatives (2001: 176-179, 195). This may account for the dissolution or decreased visibility of certain institutions in the years of the crisis, and particularly

after the electoral victory of SYRIZA in 2015. For instance, the activism surrounding the Skouries cause seems to have reached its peak in 2013 in terms of being a cause célèbre for activists from outside the region, despite the fact that both Antigold Greece and SOS Halkidiki remain active in their communities. Some interviewees also discussed how SYRIZA took advantage of the political momentum which was borne out of the protests of the "Indignants" in 2011, coming close to victory in the 2012 national parliamentary elections, winning the European parliamentary elections in 2014, and ultimately being elected in January 2015 and re-elected in September 2015. While economic conditions have remained challenging for the majority of Greeks and austerity measures and the memorandum agreements continue to be enforced, even today by a government which was elected on a platform of abolishing these agreements and ending austerity, a movement akin to that of 2011 has not come close to re-emerging in Greece. Another notable example illustrating this point comes from the protest movement cleaning women who were laid off as a result of austerity cuts in the public sector, who were employed at the Ministry of Finance, and who set up camp outside the Ministry in protest of their firing. Having earned the support of SYRIZA for their cause, the cleaning women were appointed to new civil service jobs in courthouses soon after SYRIZA's electoral victory.[61] This example also illustrates the culture of clientelism and patronage, which has long been observed in Greece and which has been cited as one of the reasons why Greece's official civil society has not been able to develop to the same degree as in other Western countries.

The significance of social and new media tools and their impact on both civil society and the public sphere as perceived by the respondents to the electronic survey questionnaire, is evident from the results. Respondents rated the impact of social and new media upon the Greek

[61] See http://www.arcadiaportal.gr/news/apo-katharistries-grammateis-sta-dikastiria.

public sphere as mildly significant and slightly negative, but nevertheless somewhat higher than those recorded for the impact of the mainstream media upon the Greek public sphere, even if the quality of present-day public discourse was recorded at very low levels overall. Results were more positive for social and new media's impact on civil society, which was found to be better-developed than the Greek public sphere, albeit still in negative territory, while the significance and quality of social media's impact on civil society was viewed as positive, and significantly higher when compared to the impact on the public sphere. Furthermore, a significant majority of respondents responded that they used social media to comment on political and social issues, while a plurality stated that they used social and new media to contact elected officials or to follow at least one political party on social media. Notably, in predicting the quality and significance of the future impact of social and new media upon the public sphere in Greece, the three populations were highly optimistic across the board.

Therefore, we can conclude that while the impact has not been universally positive or sustained, social and new media have, overall, impacted the public sphere and civil society positively in Greece. Even though clientelism, patronage, and "diaploki" are still prevalent, social media have provided a new space of public discourse which did not exist previously, there has been a significant level of usage of social and new media tools for matters of public interest and concern, many new civil society organizations and groups have developed (particularly in the "unofficial" sphere), and volunteerism is more prevalent than it was a decade or more ago, even though institutional credibility remains low in Greece, likely due in large part to the ongoing and protracted economic crisis.

Overall, what might be the most significant outcome of all is that which cannot be measured yet. Afouxenidis referred to the "collective memory" that participation in various volunteer initiatives during the years of the economic crisis may have fostered. If the Greek public sphere and civil society are indeed ephemeral in nature, it may well be that this collective memory may be employed again at some undetermined point in the future, and will play an increasing role in Greek society in the future, as individuals who were young when they participated in these volunteer activities during the years of the economic crisis, grow older and become more active citizens.

8.2 – RQ2: How do public institutions, as well as civil society, citizen, and activist organizations and movements employ social media to engage with the public, to spread their message and to organize political or social movements?

In examining how and to what extent social and new media have been used by public institutions (such as political parties, government ministries, and local municipalities), by new political parties and formations, and by social and activist movements in order to disseminate their message and for the purposes of organizing, the following indicators can be utilized: the formation of new political parties, the development and growth of new social movements, the development of protest movements with the aid of social and new media tools, and changes in the political landscape (such as changes in voter behavior or participation).

Here we may begin by examining the illustrative example presented in chapter 6, the Independent Greeks political party. From its inception in 2012, the Independent Greeks developed reputation as being the "party of Facebook," for three reasons: first, because the party first announced that it was launching via Facebook; second, because the party's founder and

president, Panos Kammenos, was himself tremendously active and outspoken on social media; and third, because in the first months of its existence, the Independent Greeks used Facebook as a tool of public deliberation, for the formulation and development of the party's initial manifesto and policy platform, and also for the evaluation and selection of candidates for the parliamentary elections of 2012. This strategy seems to have been successful, as the Independent Greeks surpassed 10 percent in the May 2012 elections and surpassed 8 percent in the follow-up elections a month later. Since then, however, the party could be said to have traveled in two directions concurrently. On the one hand, its voter share has trended downward, receiving 3.46 percent of the vote in the 2014 European parliamentary elections, 4.75 percent in the January 2015 national parliamentary elections, and 3.69 percent in the September 2015 national parliamentary elections. On the other hand, its share in both January and September 2015 was enough to earn representation in Parliament, and this parliamentary representation enabled the Independent Greeks to join a governing coalition with the winner of both of those races, SYRIZA. While the electoral share of the Independent Greeks has decreased, its influence has increased as the party finds itself participating in the government of Greece since January 2015.

What has also declined, however, is the party's usage of social and new media. The Facebook page of the Independent Greeks has not been used for public deliberation or voting since the first months of the party's existence in 2012, the party's Twitter account, as stated by Tsatsaroni, is used exclusively for the purpose of responding to opposition political parties, while even Panos Kammenos' once-fiery social media presence can be said to have been toned down ever since he became Minister of Defense following the January 2015 elections. This was noted by Tsatsaroni in her 2017 follow-up interview, where she admitted that the party did not interact

with the public via its social media accounts. Other signs of this decline appear as well. For instance, in 2012-2013 the party was discussing plans to establish a web TV channel. This initiative now seems to be inactive.[62]

The most significant change, or reversal if one prefers, pertains to the party's politics, and this is likely what has resulted in the precipitous decline of its electoral share after its initial strong showing. Having marketed itself as a patriotic, anti-austerity, anti-memorandum party in 2012, it is now participating in a governing coalition which has continued the previously existing memorandum agreement and austerity measures and ratified new memorandum agreements and austerity measures as well. Tsatsaroni, in her 2017 follow-up interview, described this political shift in diplomatic terms, stating that the Independent Greeks have most recently campaigned as the party which would most responsibly and fairly implement the memorandum and austerity agreements, a far cry from their rhetoric in 2012. In other words, the Independent Greeks have replicated the policies of their predecessors.

Moving beyond this illustrative example, the same can be said about the winner of the January and September 2015 elections, SYRIZA, the majority partner within the current governing coalition. Prior to its initial electoral victory, SYRIZA had campaigned on a "radical leftist" platform, promising to abolish the memorandum agreements and roll back the austerity measures. This, of course, has not happened. It could therefore be argued that SYRIZA, like the Independent Greeks, has replicated the policies of its predecessors in government. Emblematic of the party's "about-face" once in power is the case of Efi Ahtsioglou, who is said to have deleted all of the old anti-austerity, anti-memorandum tweets from her Twitter timeline when she was

[62] See http://www.anexartitoiellines.gr/webtv/livewebtv.php.

appointed to a ministerial post in 2016. Notably, it was other social media users who noticed the missing tweets, reproducing them online ("E Efi Ahtsioglou," 2016).

However, what should also be highlighted is how SYRIZA was elected in the first place. A common sentiment expressed by interviewees is that SYRIZA was able to successfully harness the momentum and support of social movements such as the "Indignants" movement in 2011, the activism relating to the Skouries mining activities, the protests which followed the closure of ERT in 2013, and even less prominent movements, such as the aforementioned protest of the dismissed Ministry of Finance cleaning women. Being that most of these movements were very prominent and visible in the social media sphere, it is reasonable to assume that SYRIZA itself benefited, especially when its politicians and representatives were themselves quite vocal and visible within these movements during the period in question. Moreover, SYRIZA's campaign in 2012, 2014 and 2015 was recognized by interviews and also by those who responded to the electronic survey questionnaire as being by and away the most effective and successful during those electoral contests. This is exemplified by the extremely strong popularity and visibility of the #asktsipras online question-and-answer session in January 2015, which is said to have trended third worldwide on Twitter. It could therefore be said that SYRIZA was helped, not hurt, by social and new media leading up to the January 2015 elections in particular, where the party rose to power for the first time and made headlines worldwide. This was reflected in the survey results, where almost two-thirds of respondents named SYRIZA as one of the parties which benefited the most from its presence on social and new media. In addition, almost half of the respondents felt that SYRIZA was aided by its social and new media presence in the 2012

parliamentary elections, and a majority believed that this was the case in the 2014 European parliamentary elections.

Another factor to consider is the expansion of the Greek Parliament in terms of the number of parties represented, which is itself a phenomenon which has grown during the years of the economic crisis. Eight parties entered parliament in September 2015, while seven parties earned representation in the January 2015 elections and the May and June 2012 parliamentary elections. By way of comparison, four parties earned parliamentary representation in the 2004 elections and five parties entered parliament in the 2007 and 2009 national elections. Does this expansion relate, however, to anything that may have occurred in the online realm? It's hard to say. The new entrant in the September 2015 elections was the Centrists' Union, which despite a series of videos highlighting its anti-corruption platform which went viral, did not have a particularly strong social media. Nor is the Centrists' Union a new political party or "product" of the crisis, having been founded in the early 1990s.

What is more noteworthy is that despite the heated memorandum versus anti-memorandum and "Europe versus Grexit" schism in Greece in recent years, none of the smaller political parties which advocate a Greek exit from the Eurozone, such as EPAM and Popular Unity, have been able to attain enough votes to enter Parliament. To Potami represents an interesting case, as it also crafted a savvy and youth-friendly social media and online profile when the party launched in 2014, but the party also had a visible leader, Stavros Theodorakis, who was a longtime journalist and television presenter with wide name recognition in Greece.

Golden Dawn could be said to be a party that has benefited from social media, but other than its website, it does not actually maintain an official social media presence—instead, its

supporters have been active on Facebook and in the blogosphere in particular. To what extent this truly helped the party is not possible to gauge, and it can be surmised that it is just as likely that parties such as Golden Dawn and others are just as much the beneficiaries of a "protest vote" from a fed-up and increasingly impoverished populace, as they were the beneficiaries of support derived from their online presence.

The same could also be said about parties who have also seen a dramatic decline in their electoral percentage, with PASOK being an obvious example. At one time a governing dynasty in Greece, the party has found itself in the single digits in electoral contests since the 2014 European parliamentary elections. Some interviewees, such as Al-Saleh, described PASOK as being the victim of online attacks and trolling relating to its policies and actions (such as signing the initial memorandum agreement), and it's possible that there was some negative impact on its electoral performance as a result of this negative online publicity. However, it's perhaps even more likely that PASOK was simply punished at the polls by voters who blamed the party for the country's predicament and economic difficulties. It should also be mentioned that PASOK is widely attributed as being the political party which brought social media to Greece in a political context, essentially replicating concepts which were already tried and true in countries such as the United States, while also implementing e-governance and transparency initiatives. Despite these efforts, PASOK was unable to avoid an electoral collapse.

Still other parties, such as KKE, have remained largely indifferent towards social media and do not seem to have been hurt by their absence, though it is impossible to tell whether they would have been helped in any way if they *did* maintain a social media presence.

At the municipal level, the example of Yiannis Boutaris, the mayor of Thessaloniki, stands out. Boutaris has developed a reputation—both in Greece and globally—as being a progressive and innovative elected official and one that is highly outspoken, a trend that would theoretically mesh well with social media. Yet Boutaris was not an active social media user at the time of his initial election in 2010, but was nevertheless able to garner support amongst younger demographics despite his own advanced age. Indeed, Boutaris did not create an official Twitter account until September 2017, well after his re-election in the 2014 municipal elections. Boutaris therefore represents the example of a politician who can be successful electorally and who can craft an image of someone who is forward-thinking, albeit highly controversial, without being present in the world of social media.

Notably, the "Symi Today" blog which was presented as an example of serving as the unofficial "opposition" to a mayor who ran unopposed, has not been updated since December 2014, just a few months after that year's municipal elections, despite the blog administrator's stated intention to maintain the blog past the 2014 elections in order to serve a watchdog role.

Other smaller political parties and movements with an early strong presence on social and new media have not been able to translate that visibility into electoral success. This includes the "Dimiourgia, Xana!" party, despite the fact that its president, Thanos Tzimeros, remains a highly visible commentator on Facebook and Twitter. The "I Don't Pay Movement" represents another example, as the party became known on social media for its visible acts of civil disobedience. Notably, the movement itself has split into two, the original "I Don't Pay Movement" and the "I Don't Pay Movement-United Front," likely splintering the movement's support. Overall though, the crisis could be said to have given rise to a number of smaller political parties, including

Popular Unity (LAE), the United People's Front (EPAM), and the Pirate Party of Greece, in addition to To Potami and DIMAR, which was part of the governing coalition between June 2012 and June 2013. This in itself is significant.

What was also reflected by the responses provided by many of the interviewees, including representatives of political parties but also journalists and other observers, is the continued prevalent use of the social media accounts of both parties and candidates as a "bulletin" board, where press releases and media appearances are publicized and little else. This had been observed by Tsaliki-Kontogianni, referenced in chapter 2 (2015: 546-552, 557-559), and seems in large part to remain the case today. Indeed, it should also be noted that over the course of the interviews that were conducted for this study, most representatives of political parties were relatively tight-lipped about their party's usage of social media, providing few details beyond the basics and in many cases opting to discuss (and criticize, or sometimes praise) what other parties were doing instead. The aforementioned "bulletin board" usage could also be observed in the example of the Ministry of Defense and likely represents the broader attitude of most Greek government ministries towards their online and social media presence.

One final factor which must be addressed is voter behavior, and more specifically, voter participation, which has been on the decline in Greece during the years of the economic downturn and crisis. It is clear that social and new media have not been able to prevent this decline and to mobilize a similar percentage of citizens to vote as in the pre-crisis days, but it remains an open question as to whether the absence of social media would have resulted in even further apathy on the part of voters. There is also the possibility that exposure to non-mainstream content on social and new media may have *dissuaded* a portion of the public from voting.

Turning now to social movements, there was a general consensus among those who responded to the electronic survey questionnaire that the movement of the "Indignants" in 2011 would not have been possible without the aid of social and new media, with a majority of respondents answering "probably no" or "no."

Iosifidis and Wheeler, referenced in chapter 2, questioned the ability of social media to deliver lasting political change, despite their evident role in mobilizing protests in Greece and other contexts. In turn, Katrougalos, in his 2013 interview, warned that "the fatigue that is now obvious in the society can be turned into complete apathy" (personal communication, July 2, 2013). And it is this fatigue which is noticeable in Greek society in recent years. After large-scale protests in 2010 (the year that the "troika" arrived in Greece), 2011 (the year of the "Indignants") movement, 2012 (with massive protests in February of that year against the signing of the second memorandum agreement), 2013 (ERT shutdown) and 2015 (rallies organized around the July 5, 2015 national referendum), it could be argued that fatigue, disillusionment, and apathy have set in, with protests increasingly viewed by many Greeks as ineffective or hopeless, in addition to a prevalent fear about being attacked by riot police or other elements. It may also be the case that many Greeks have turned to other forms of organizing or getting involved politically which does not involve protests and mass mobilizations.

It would, however, be a mistake to say that these protest movements were completely ineffective or unsuccessful. The Greek electoral map changed drastically during this period and much of the political system was discredited. The "Indignants" protest movement could be argued to have contributed to the collapse of the Papandreou government in late 2011, and the protests of early 2012, in turn, could have hastened the demise of the caretaker government of

non-elected technocrat Loucas Papademos. The activist movement which developed in response to the mining activities in Skouries drew international attention to the issue and is still ongoing today, even if the issue is no longer as prominent as it was in the 2012-2013 period. The massive protests which followed the closure of ERT in June 2013 could have been said to have discredited ERT's replacement, NERIT, before it even launched, and arguably precipitated the restoration of ERT's broadcasts in 2015, following SYRIZA's electoral victory. In addition, a legacy remains, as ERT Open continues to broadcast, albeit solely on the radio. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, it is likely that SYRIZA was able to gain political momentum from these movements, pledging to be the voice of these movements in parliament if elected. And it should be stressed that the "Indignants" protest movement, the Skouries activist movement, and the ERT protest movement were all extremely prominent on social media.

The broader impact of the digital divide should also not be overlooked. According to statistics from the 2015 Eurobarometer "Media use in the European Union" survey, Greece ranks 23rd in the EU in internet penetration. Internet penetration is also lowest amongst the older demographics, an observation which was also made by respondents to the electronic survey questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of which identified the 55+ age bracket as being the age group which used the internet the least for obtaining news and information. This digital divide would also mean that it is less likely that older individuals have been influenced by the presence of new political parties or movements on social media. Understanding that older age groups typically vote in larger numbers, it is possible that the electoral system will see a "delayed response" where this decade's youth will enact change through the ballot box in future decades.

Furthermore, as mentioned in the preceding section, a "collective memory" of political and activist involvement may persist in the future and may be mobilized at some future point, or may translate into differing political mentalities from those of the elder generations, resulting in possible electoral changes yet to come in the future, as well as the revitalization of social and protest movements in some form. Indeed, though this is outside the time period officially being studied as part of this research project, early 2018 saw massive mobilizations in both Athens and Thessaloniki concerning a geopolitical issue of national importance, the Macedonia name dispute with Greece's northern neighbor. Hundreds of thousands of protesters took to the streets of both cities to protest any compromise on the part of the government over the name dispute, in crowds not seen since the "Indignants" movement of 2011, while the last time a protest regarding one of Greece's foreign policy issues generated such crowds was 1992, again concerning the Macedonia name.[63] The organizations which organized these rallies maintained a prominent social media presence, and it is entirely possible that they contributed to the large turnout.

Based on the above, and looking at SQ1, we can conclude that social and new media have at least partially contributed to political change, changes in political behavior, and the formation of new political movements in Greece. The two best examples of this impact are the Independent Greeks political party, via its prominent activity and presence on social media in the early days of its existence and its relative electoral success which has followed, and SYRIZA, which likely was able to harness the support of participants in protest movements such as the "Indignants" of 2011, the Skouries movement, and the protest movement following the shutdown of ERT. Furthermore, numerous political parties have been created in recent years, and at least some of

[63] See https://www.mintpressnews.com/conflict-over-the-name-macedonia-part-of-larger-struggle-for-the-future-of-greece/236814/.

these parties have maintained a very prominent social media presence, including "To Potami," "Dimiourgia, Xana," and to a lesser extent, EPAM and the Pirate Party. Golden Dawn may also have been aided indirectly, as there was a strong consensus among participants—also visible in the relevant literature referenced in chapter 2—that a wide network of unofficial online media helped promote the party via social media. Conversely, attacks appearing against incumbent political parties such as PASOK on social media may potentially have contributed to a broader decline in their credibility and, accordingly, their electoral share. However, this has not been a complete transformation. Many elected officials, as well as government ministries, still seem to "go through the motions" with regard to their online and social media presence, and social and new media has not been successful in delivering more dramatic political change to Greece, such as a departure from the Eurozone or an end to the memorandum agreements and austerity measures. Some politicians, such as Thessaloniki mayor Yiannis Boutaris, have also been able to craft a progressive and modern image whilst eschewing social media tools.

In looking at SQ2, we can conclude that social media played a significant role, at least in the early years of the crisis, in the formation of social and protest movements. This is exemplified by the "Indignants" movement, which is said to have started via a Facebook invitation and where social media was heavily used, with Radiobubble's Twitter hashtag, #rbnews, playing a prominent role. The protest movements surrounding the Skouries gold mining activities and the closure of ERT also gained prominence on social media. Despite the evident fatigue of recent years, it is also possible that the "collective memory" of participants in these movements will translate to future political or social action.

8.3 – RQ3: DO SOCIAL AND NEW MEDIA DIFFERENTIATE THEMSELVES FROM THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA IN GREECE, AND IF SO, HOW?

In analyzing the extent to which social and new media have differentiated themselves from the mainstream media in Greece, contributed to the formation and development of alternative or community-oriented media outlets in Greece (SQ3), and considered to be more credible sources of news and information compared to traditional, mainstream media institutions in Greece (SQ4), the following indicators may be taken into account: the formation and development of new media outlets (including alternative media outlets), the broadening of public discourse on existing media outlets, the development of media outlets by civil society groups, and indicators as to the credibility of online media (including social media) as compared to traditional, mainstream media outlets.

The Skai Media Group is the first illustrative example to be examined. Skai continues to maintain a preeminent position in both the television and radio landscape in Greece, while *skai.gr* remains one of the most visited news portals in the country, as recorded in the Reuters Institute survey (2016). Indeed, the *skai.gr* portal could be said to easily be the most comprehensive and well-developed of any major broadcast media outlet in the country, and accordingly, the media group's social media presence is also very well developed when compared to other major media outlets in the country. *Kathimerini* is still considered the "newspaper of record" in Greece, and despite a center-right political stance that is often unpopular for its longstanding support of the memorandum agreements and austerity measures that have been implemented in Greece, it is considered one of the most credible publications in the country. Its role and impact in the broader Greek public sphere and online sphere, however,

can simply be described as perpetuating the hegemonic policies being enforced in Greece, while it could also be said that its sophisticated and comprehensive social and new media presence and emphasis on news content has helped it attain a leading position in Greece's online news sphere.

Enikos.gr represents the interesting case of a hybrid between a traditional news portal, a blog, and a mainstream television show hosted by a prominent television presenter, radio talk show host, and journalist, Nikos Chatzinikolaou. It was very clearly and very obviously inspired by the success of news blogs in Greece in the preceding decade, and its design and philosophy (very frequent postings that are short in length and which contain lots of photos and/or videos) is a continuation of the formula which made news blogs such as *Troktiko* popular. The site was well integrated with social and new media, including for a substantial period, a web TV program produced by Chatzinikolaou. It is also a creation of the economic crisis in the sense, having launched in 2011. As was shown in the Reuters Institute survey, *enikos.gr* maintains a strong position amongst news websites in Greece, but this is likely due to the name recognition of Chatzinikolaou, the free publicity *enikos.gr* receives via Chatzinikolaou's other media ventures, and demonstrates the replication of the offline media system into the online sphere in Greece.

Radiobubble represents the most interesting and complicated of the illustrative examples. One of the earliest web radio stations to launch in Greece (in 2007), Radiobubble was a major presence in the Greek social media sphere—and Twitter in particular—roughly between the time of the December 2008 riots and the ERT shutdown in 2013, particularly via its #rbnews hashtag and its curated news feed based on information received via that hashtag. Radiobubble's news presence was prominent enough that *The Guardian* incorporated the #rbnews feed into its own live blogging of the June 2012 national parliamentary elections in Greece. The radio station's

content could itself be considered alternative, with no impositions regarding the station's political content or news programming. Social media was extensively integrated into the station's programming, and many of its hosts were prominent Twitter "personalities" in their own right. The physical space which Radiobubble maintained until 2014, its café in the Exarchia district of Athens, featured an openly visible studio which was accessible to the café's patrons. Radiobubble, via both its programming and its Twitter presence, has been credited with helping disseminate news about the "Indignants" protests, the Skouries protests, and numerous other protests, rallies, cases of police violence and other developments not typically covered by the mainstream media, to a wider audience both in Greece and abroad. For instance, the #rbnews hashtag was said to have been the most popular Twitter hashtag in Greece in 2011. Radiobubble's international exposure also included radio programming and tweets in other languages. Changes, however, began to occur beginning in 2014. The café shut down and the station relocated to a less visible location, while the station itself was legally registered as a collective, a decision which apparently resulted in a schism within the staff. Since then, Radiobubble has much more heavily emphasized music programming and has become much quieter on social media, while news programming and Twitter activity have been de-emphasized.

This has been a turbulent period for mainstream media as well. Venerable and heavily indebted private broadcaster Mega Channel, once the most popular television station in Greece, ceased all news programming in 2016 and is (barely) surviving with a lineup of reruns and movies. The *Eleftherotypia* newspaper, long considered a voice of the intellectual left, shut down for a second time, not long after its relaunch in 2013. The Lambrakis Press Group (DOL), which published such prominent newspapers as *Ta Nea* and *To Vima*, collapsed and its titles were

scooped up by oligarch Vangelis Marinakis, who already owned the weekly *Parapolitika* newspaper and radio station Parapolitika FM. Vima FM, a news radio station operated by DOL, did not survive and has gone off the air as of 2017. Once-prominent radio station Flash 96 returned to the airwaves after a long absence, operating as a worker-run station, but it too went off the air once again, in 2017.

Throughout this period, not much progress was made in altering or revamping the legislative context governing broadcasting, which among other things has created a closed broadcast market for news stations on both television and radio. A licensing procedure launched by the SYRIZA-led government in 2016 issued four national television licenses to four prominent oligarchs, but was struck down in court as unconstitutional, maintaining the status quo for the time being. Tolios noted that "this is a case in which the government presented a poorly elaborated piece of legislation…the political backlash that the Government experienced ironically had to do more with the fact that they did not punish the channels enough" (personal communication, February 22, 2017).

Indeed, it could be said that the "diaploki" system continues unabated, despite the campaign promises of SYRIZA to challenge the media owners. This can also be seen by the fact that despite continuously declining newspaper circulations, already among the lowest in Europe, new titles continue to be released, including *Documento*, *Filelefθeros*, and *Nea Selida* newspaper. What this seems to indicate, especially based on the existing literature on the Greek press and on the remarks made by interviewees, and in light of dramatically falling circulation figures, is that these newspapers are launching not with the objective to earn a profit but to serve other political and business interests. Newspaper circulation declined 19.6 percent in 2017, a

year after sustaining a 15.9 percent circulation decline, yet new titles continue to launch (Kokkinidis: 2018). This would seem to reconfirm the continued existence and vitality of the "diaploki" system, which perpetuates the credibility crisis which the media industry is facing.

The credibility crisis has been overwhelmingly confirmed by surveys by Eurobarometer and the Reuters Institute, by the remarks shared by interviewees, and also by the results of the electronic survey questionnaire. Regarding the questionnaire, an overwhelming majority of respondents stated their belief that the mainstream media are suffering from a credibility crisis and a similarly strong majority felt that the media is biased towards certain political parties. The credibility of individual mediums—and particularly television—was also ranked at low levels, with all mediums falling on the negative end of the scale. This is one area where social media and new media more broadly seems to have gained substantial ground: a wide majority of respondents stated that they used social and new media for the purpose of obtaining news and information, and a similarly high majority said that the internet was the medium they used the most for the purpose of obtaining news and information.

Nevertheless, this has not meant that there is blind faith or credibility ascribed to online media. The survey results delivered a slightly negative credibility score for the internet as a source of news and information, albeit higher than the other mediums. Many of the interviewees also expressed their reservations about the credibility of social and new media as a news source, highlighting how the existing offline media system has, in many ways, been reproduced online, with portals and "blogs" owned by prominent journalists, such as Nikos Chatzinikolaou's *enikos.gr*, emblematic of this crossover from the offline to online media realm.

The general consensus was also that the older demographic was the one which hung on to mainstream media the most. This can likely be connected to the digital divide which is still evident in Greece. As the older generations are also more likely to vote in elections, it can be said that mainstream news and journalism still wields a great deal of political influence in this regard.

Notably, many small, independent, alternative, or collectively-run media outlets made their appearance during the years of the economic crisis in Greece, many of which were based entirely or almost entirely on the internet. Just a few of these were presented in this study, including *Alterthess*, *Hot Doc* magazine, mindthecam, *Okeanews*, Omnia TV, *Protagon*, *seleo.gr*, *The Press Project*, *Unfollow* magazine, and *Vmedia.gr*, in addition to, of course, Radiobubble. Many of these remain in operation as of 2018, with sites such as *Protagon* and *The Press Project* holding a particularly prominent position in the Greek online landscape.

Not all of these outlets have survived, including mindthecam and *Okeanews* (both inactive since 2015). As Kounenakis noted, "[a]ll the alternative media that we were acting back then, either they have disappeared or they produce almost zero shows or their productions are very poor…The social need is different" (personal communication, June 13, 2017). Other subsidiary initiatives of many of the aforementioned outlets have also not survived, such as the English-language edition of *Unfollow* magazine, *Borderline Reports*. Other outlets seem to have been absorbed in some form. *Unfollow*, for instance, has been released via the *Parapolitika* newspaper, while *Hot Doc* is now circulated via the *Documento* newspaper. Outlets such as *Hot Doc* and the *To Xoni* newspaper, which markets itself as "the only anti-austerity newspaper," but has nevertheless fanatically—and ironically—supported the SYRIZA-Independent Greeks coalition, including the austerity measures and memorandum agreements it has enacted.

Bailey et al. presented four conceptualizations of alternative media, the fourth of which defined alternative media as a "rhizome," which sees such outlets as non-linear, anarchic, nomadic, and constantly in flux. These outlets tend to operate with a high degree of contingency, where what is considered "alternative" at one time may become "mainstream" at some other point in time (2008: 25-29). To some extent, the aforementioned examples (*Hot Doc*, *To Xoni*) fit this definition, as both publications marketed themselves as oppositional mediums prior to SYRIZA's election in January 2015, but have now come out in support of policies very much similar—if not identical—to those which they once passionately opposed.

Atkinson argued that media can be classified as "alternative" if they meet one of three definitions, one of which pertains to alternative production methods, independent of corporate media industries (2010: 22). Under this classification, collectives such as Radiobubble, *Alterthess*, and Omnia TV could be considered "alternative," as well as many other smaller media outlets which operate on a non-commercial basis or with a non-hierarchical structure. It could therefore be said that social and new media have contributed to the development of alternative media outlets in Greece (SQ3).

In turn, looking at SQ4, while the of the credibility of news and information found online as compared to offline remains an open question, the general consensus is that the *perception* of a significant portion of the public is that online sources are more accurate and credible. This is due to the severe credibility crisis of the mainstream media, which was reflected in the literature, in the comments of interviewees who participated in this study, and in the survey results.

8.4 – THEORETICAL AND BROADER IMPLICATIONS

The general sentiment of many of the participants in this study, and my own observations on the ground in Greece between 2012 and 2017, both contribute to a conclusion that a significant percentage of the Greek public felt that it was completely shut out of official channels of public deliberation and discourse. This is evident in a variety of ways. Numerous surveys have repeatedly found low levels of trust in official societal institutions in Greece. The sclerosis which is a marked characteristic of Greek media landscape has resulted in a broadcasting system where television and radio stations are unlicensed and do not have to abide by many public service requirements which presumably would be a condition of official broadcast licenses. Furthermore, the closed broadcast news market ensures that no new voices can enter the airwaves unless they have deep enough pockets to afford to purchase one of the few existing stations that is classified as a "news station." This severely curtails the number of broadcast news voices which can possibly operate even within a broadcast landscape that is in some ways otherwise anarchic.

Even the press, which is not restricted in Greece, has shown a general indifference towards the needs and opinions of the public at large, as evidenced by the Kaitatzi-Whitlock study referenced in chapter 2 which found that only approximately one-third of newspapers studied featured a "letters to the editor" section, and by comments made by interviewees such as Zenakos, who described his experience being instructed to "look down upon" the readers and to address them as if from a pedestal. The survey data, and the questionnaire specifically provided to newspaper editors, also highlighted the strong prevalence of self-censorship among journalists in Greece. Returning to the mass media landscape more broadly, there was a general sentiment that the mass media, via their news practices and reporting, drove a significant portion of the

Greek populace to seek out news and information via the internet, while the credibility crisis suffered by Greece's mass media outlets was confirmed by the individual interviews, the electronic survey questionnaire that was conducted, by surveys referenced in chapter 2, and even by the illustrative example of the Skai Media Group, where it was revealed that the organization, despite its significant and in some ways sophisticated social media presence, does not have a unified social media policy, nor does it go to any special lengths to interact with the audience via social media platforms.

This indifference was also evident politically. In the survey questionnaire provided exclusively to Greek representatives in the European Parliament, many of the respondents stated that their policy positions were not impacted in the slightest by communications they received from constituents via social media. The illustrative example of the "Independent Greeks" political party further demonstrates this indifference. While the party, in the inaugural months of it existence, marketed itself as the "party of Facebook" and provided opportunities to the public to participate in online deliberation of its policy platform and selection of its candidates, a 2017 follow-up interview with an advisor to the party's president (and current Defense Minister) Panos Kammenos was revelatory, as it was clearly stated that the party quite consciously did not engage in a dialogue with the public via online means.

Therefore, there is substantial evidence to support the assertion that a significant portion of the public in Greece felt that it did not have a space to express itself, particularly on matters of public importance. It is here where the internet, and particularly social media and new media, come into the picture for ordinary citizens. Despite the relatively low broadband penetration rates in Greece as compared to most other European Union member states, Greece has been found to

have amongst the highest levels of Facebook membership in the world, as well as very high levels of using social media for the purpose of obtaining news and information. Certainly during the crisis, social media were repeatedly used as a means of political expression that was restricted elsewhere, as was evidenced by the "Indignants" movement, the protest movements relating to the Skouries gold mining activities, and the protests following the shutdown of ERT. Political movements ranging from SYRIZA and the Independent Greeks, to Golden Dawn, to smaller extraparliamentary parties such as Dimiourgia, Xana! were, each in their own way, effectively able to harness social and new media to make significant electoral gains at various times during the period that was examined. Civil society organizations, including many in the "unofficial" sphere, also heavily utilized social and new media, as did alternative media outlets such as Radiobubble, which was also intimately tied in to both the social movement sphere and to civil society via initiatives such as Hackademy and Tutorpool.

An argument could therefore be made that there has been a great degree of communicative action in the Habermasian sense, which has unearthed a radical democratic framework which has contributed to the formation and operation of social and political movements and certain civil society initiatives, and indeed, the development of multiple public spheres, as described by Habermas or Benhabib, or subaltern counterpublics, as conceptualized by Fraser. These counterpublics can be quite varied: Downing, for instance, highlighted how even fascist or far-right media can itself be considered "radical," and parallels can be drawn here with the effective (even if largely unofficial) use of social and online media by Golden Dawn. However, these counterpublics could also be those which used Radiobubble's #rbnews hashtag,

or which organized initiatives such as the Metropolitan Community Clinic of Ellinikon, the Time Bank of Athens and Syntagma Square, or the "Save Greek Water" movement.

Nevertheless it is imperative that social media and its role as a new, digital "commons" not be romanticized, and not just due to its potential to also foster potentially regressive political forces. Social and new media platforms, whether we are talking about Facebook or Twitter or blogs and videos hosted on Google's Blogspot and YouTube platforms, are *privately-owned* platforms. There is a great danger in relying upon private platforms for the purposes of public speech and deliberation, as access to such platforms can be curtailed at any time by the owners of the medium itself, or through any number of other technological, economic, or regulatory factors. For instance, recent trends in countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom have been for anti-neoliberal and, in many cases, political voices from ideological backgrounds as varied as the far left and the conservative right to be censored by many social media platforms, with videos and social media postings removed and user accounts suspended or deleted. While this has been less of a problem in Greece in recent years, the attempted crackdowns against "news blogs" a decade ago serve as an example as to how content that some find to be inconvenient can be removed from privately-owned platforms such as Blogspot.

Lawrence Lessig warned about the dangers of "architecture" in the online world and how it could be weaponized to serve as the perfect tool of regulation and curtailment of speech. There are many ways in which "architecture" can accomplish this, above and beyond Lessig's original conceptualization, ranging from restrictive terms of service implemented by social media providers such as Facebook and Twitter, to character limits (such as those which Twitter is famous for), to website hosting companies and their ability to remove privately-hosted websites

if they violate terms of service agreements or exceed bandwidth limits. Regulatory threats such as the elimination of net neutrality protections may also create a situation where network traffic is throttled or the amount of bandwidth which individual users can consume is capped, therefore limiting the amount of content users can potentially create, upload, and disseminate. Indeed, such throttling and capping was already a reality in the United States on mobile networks and even on many wired broadband networks, prior to the elimination of net neutrality regulations.

Downing also referenced the "price of participation," which for alternative media in particular, historically meant the costs of operating an office or of printing and disseminating their material. This "price of participation" can potentially be expanded to the price of accessing the internet—and even more so if bandwidth caps and throttling are in play. This price can also include the costs of hosting a website and paying for consumed traffic and bandwidth, or the price of an internet subscription itself. Economic inequalities also lead to inequalities of access—the well-known digital divide—and in societies such as Greece, there is still a significant percentage of households which does not possess broadband access even to this day. Even if we accept that the "public sphere 2.0" is one located in privately-owned space, one cannot participate even in this "private commons" if they do not have access to it in the first place.

From a civil society perspective, it could nevertheless be argued that Greece represents a case where, similar to Gramsci's conceptualization of the "war of position" between the hegemonic powers and forces from below, civil society is a space which is very much in play and which has been hotly contested during the years of the economic crisis. Indeed, the expansion of the "unofficial" civil society sphere, with the formation of organizations which are not legally registered (such as the Metropolitan Community Clinic of Ellinikon for instance) highlights just

such a "war of position," with social and new media weaponized by such organizations which otherwise do not have easy and affordable access to the wider public sphere. Moreover, the activities of activists, volunteers, and participants in such civil society activities and in related social movements can be viewed in parallel with Gramsci's conceptualization of the "organic intellectual" who arises not from the hegemonic system, but from below. Arampatzi and Nicholls, in their examination of urban space in Athens as a space of mobilization, highlight the existence of such activists at a local, neighborhood level, and the linkages such activists make with other similar activists in other neighborhoods, cities, and regions, converting local movements into national ones. Personal ties—which are particularly strong in Greece and centered largely around extended families and local communities—play a significant role here, and resemble Habermas' conceptualization of the "lifeworld," or space of personal ties and relationships that is separate from the official public sphere.

Here, the importance of "local" should be stressed. Castells, in his conceptualization of the civil society, accurately notes that such organizations have increasingly taken on social roles which were previously the realm of the state. This has certainly been the case in Greece, where we have seen, in a strong sense, the privatization of many institutional functions, paralleling the Habermasian view that the public sphere can be co-opted by strong private actors, such as privately-owned media outlets. However, Castells foresaw such civil society organizations operating on a global scale. What we have seen in Greece, however, is a great deal of "unofficial" and local, community-based civil society activity, much of which remains strictly within the local realm. Roumeliotis, for instance, highlighted the important role of such local groups in creating a silent civil society revolution never before seen in Europe. At the same time,

certain prominent movements, such as the Skouries activist movement, have effectively utilized social and new media to become known outside of the local community, initially in the rest of Greece, and later in the rest of the world. Castells' civil society conceptualization, therefore, could be altered to be bidirectional, recognizing that while civil society may indeed be co-opting the traditional role of the state on many levels, linkages between such groups are made not just on a global level, but also on a local, and sometimes hyperlocal, level. Downing's conceptualization of "generational resurgence" also comes into play here, as it closely parallels Afouxenidis' idea of "collective memory." It is possible that the "collective memories" of participants in civil society initiatives and social movements during the years of the economic crisis may, at some undetermined point in the future, lead to a "generational resurgence" with unknown implications for Greece politically, socially, or otherwise.

Nevertheless, it is important to not romanticize the potential role of social media in fostering civil society activity or encouraging and aiding social movements. The example of the Ukraine, for instance, and the "Maidan Revolution," largely driven by social media, serve as an example, as this "revolution" ultimately resulted in the installment of a politically regressive government and the further impoverishment of large swaths of the population. A similar argument could be made regarding the outcome of the "Arab Spring" in countries such as Egypt. In Greece, a somewhat similar phenomenon potentially occurred with the "Indignants" movement. While there is much evidence to suggest that most of the participants in this movement were there with legitimate intentions and in genuine opposition to foreign-imposed policies of neoliberalism and economic austerity, comments made by Yalourakis and Baboussi, who claimed to have been part of the team which launched the Facebook invitation which

spawned this movement, and who said that they were also the administrators of the movement's central Facebook page which later disappeared, suggest that the movement's beginnings were not as innocent as often presented. Indeed, they could be interpreted as suggesting that the movement was launched to serve as a "release valve" for an increasingly infuriated populace. The ultimate failure of such movements to deliver more radical change—such as the abolition of the austerity measures and memorandum agreements or a Greek exit from the Eurozone or even the European Union itself—could then serve as a demoralizing factor for a population which may feel that, despite its best efforts, attempts to change the system are in vain and doomed to fail.

Indeed, even a development which may initially appear as a victory might turn out to be a replication of the incumbent system. SYRIZA's electoral victory in January 2015 on a "radical leftist" and anti-austerity platform serves as a case in point, as the party's politics, once in government, very quickly began to parallel the pro-austerity politics of its predecessors. The same can be said of SYRIZA's coalition partner, the Independent Greeks, who also had once campaigned on an anti-austerity platform. In other words, incumbent politics have ended up being replicated, while parties such as SYRIZA could be said to have either utilized radical rhetoric, alternative media from the left, and social movements as a means to the end, or to have simply been unable to withstand pressures from global neoliberal forces.

The danger of co-optation of social movements, civil society, and alternative media context was highlighted by Bailey, Lievrouw, and Rodríguez. Lievrouw, for instance, wrote about the cycle of capture, co-optation and subversion common to such initiatives. Parallels can be drawn here with formerly politically alternative or radical media outlets such as *Hot Doc* magazine, the *To Xoni* newspaper, and *Unfollow* magazine. The first two, upon SYRIZA's

electoral victory, continued to support SYRIZA—even through its about-face from anti-austerity to pro-austerity politics. The latter, which was collectively run, is now circulated as an insert in a weekly mainstream newspaper owned by a major oligarch. In turn, Costas Efimeros of *The Press Project* spoke about his desire to replace the mainstream media by becoming *the* mainstream, while the portal's parent company handled technological contracts for major mainstream publishing groups in Greece. This reflects a warning from Ioanna Paraskevopoulou, a volunteer with Radiobubble, who soon after SYRIZA's initial electoral victory in 2015 questioned the willingness of many left-wing alternative media outlets to question a left-wing government in the event that it moved away from the positions which earned it an electoral victory in the first place.

The aforementioned examples highlight the fears of Bailey, Lievrouw, and Rodríguez that such media outlets can be co-opted, captured, or penetrated by their funding sources, central authorities, or other major actors (such as political parties). Bailey's concept of the "rhizome," which is ephemeral and ever-changing and which can be alternative in one context and mainstream in another, is also largely applicable. The "rhizome," however, was de-centralized, but it can be argued that such examples as that of *Unfollow* highlight how a previously de-centralized (in this case, collectively-run) initiatives can themselves be absorbed and become a component of the centralized, hegemonic system.

It is here where "diaploki" comes into the picture. We have seen how outlets which presented an alternative perspective can and have been co-opted in Greece. We have seen how "radical" political movements can themselves be co-opted or move in directions quite different from their original platform and rhetoric. We have, at the same time, seen the expansion of the public sphere and civil society in Greece, but with much of this new discourse taking place

within privately-owned space (social networks). Another factor to consider is the replication of the incumbent mass media system from the offline world to the online world. In the case of Greece, mainstream media outlets such as Skai and prominent mainstream journalists such as Nikos Chatzinikolaou (founder of *enikos.gr*) have attained a prominent place in the country's online news sphere. As the public has increasingly moved to the internet as its primary source of news, the information that it is receiving is, in many cases, coming from the same journalists and media outlets which represented the mainstream media sphere offline, and which were beneficiaries of the "diaploki" system and the "Polarized Pluralist" media system which historically existed in the country.

Therefore, I would like to put forth a new conceptualization of "diaploki," which we can name "diaploki 2.0," representing a system which is still based around the traditional pillars of the "diaploki" system—namely, the interplay between the state and political parties, major media moguls, and the major business and economic interests these oligarchs represent. However, in this system, the offline "Polarized Pluralist" model has been replicated online, via outlets which are either owned and operated by the same offline actors, or which have been co-opted by such actors in various ways. "Diaploki," in other words, is reproduced and arguably even expanded, while online users who may be under the impression that they are turning their backs on the mainstream by obtaining news and information from online sources, may in the end be exposed to the same information from the same actors as those they believed they had eschewed.

Furthermore, to this triangle we may add a new pillar: privately-owned social media, which serve as the sites where "alternate" or "subaltern" public spheres often exist and develop, and where a substantial portion of public discourse and deliberation takes place today, expanding

the public sphere and civil society activity on the one hand. Such private ownership of spaces of public discourse place this very discourse at risk of being co-opted or simply shut down, due to online "architecture" ranging from terms of service to character limits, to an expansion of "regulatory capture," where existing laws are used simply to stifle inconvenient speech, as could be said to have been the case with legal actions taken against bloggers a decade ago in Greece. In conjunction with an offline media system which continues to be largely inaccessible to the public and a regulatory system which itself can be said to be subject to regulatory capture, "diaploki 2.0" can be said to be a more refined, and potentially more dangerous, incarnation of the "Polarized Pluralist" system.

The case of Greece can therefore be said to make these theoretical contributions to the existing literature, providing an understanding of how social and new media may contribute, on the one hand, to the expansion of the public sphere, public deliberation and debate, and to civil society, but at the same time, also contribute to the strengthening of forces which can be said to restrict or curtail the public sphere and civil society. "Diaploki 2.0" can potentially be applied to other countries with a similar media and social landscape as Greece—such as the countries of Southern Europe and the Mediterranean region or many countries in Latin America. From the perspective of social movements and the impact of social and new media, Greece can also serve as a useful comparison case with other countries and regions which have experienced "revolutions" and large-scale movements driven by social movement, such as Spain, the United States, and the Arab world. Finally, this study may help contribute to an understanding of the broader impact of social and new media within contexts where there are low levels of

institutional trust, where there is a protracted economic crisis or depression, and in contexts where the public sphere or civil society is perceived as not having strongly developed.

8.5 – Gaps in the Research and Thoughts for the Future

This was admittedly a vast research study, and with a multi-year research project of such a scale, it is inevitable that some notable events had to be omitted. This includes the July 2015 referendum, which led to major demonstrations and rallies in Greece and significant activity on social media, especially once the referendum result was, in essence, overturned by the government. However, the referendum was declared very suddenly, with less than two weeks' notice, and it occurred after the main bulk of the interviews for this study was conducted, as well as the electronic survey questionnaire, which was closed earlier in 2015. Therefore, the referendum unfortunately had to be omitted from this study. The social media activity associated with the referendum, including the #ThisIsACoup and #Oxi ("no") hashtags offer fertile ground for research which can build upon this project.

The electronic survey research itself, in the interest of length, also omitted further questions which could have been asked regarding civil society and its development and impact in Greece, as well as questions on the formation of new political parties and the influence and impact of social media in fostering their creation. Questions could also have been included on respondents' perceptions regarding the causes for the decline in protest activity, on the mainstream media and perceptions as to its level of concern for the feelings of its audience, and on the impact of trolling (for which only elected officials were asked).

Other limitations of this study include its overall Athens-centric nature, a possible bias towards interview subjects that were active online and on social media (and a possible resulting

"insider" bias), the omission of representatives of regional government units in Greece from the interview process, and the growth of the refugee and migrant crisis, which has also led to a significant amount of discourse on social media.

Response from civil society organizations to the electronic questionnaire was low, and there are many possible reasons to account for this, including suspicion, inactivity, not checking e-mail regularly or at all, discomfort of one individual in speaking for an entire group or movement, and an inability to delegate the responsibility of completing the questionnaire to one individual. A future study could expand the sample to more regions or revise the criteria for selecting such organizations. Similarly, while Greece's representatives in the European Parliament were selected in order for there to be a more manageable sample, a future study could provide questionnaires to the 300 members of the Greek Parliament, or perhaps to a randomly-selected sample of members of the Greek Parliament, in order to ensure a larger sample size, as the small sample of the survey conducted for this study precluded broader, generalizable conclusions or a deeper statistical analysis of the results. At the same time, the long length of the survey questionnaire may have dissuaded some potential subjects from participating.

Greece is, in general, a country which is underrepresented in the English-language body of academic research across several fields. This means that there is great potential and fertile ground for future research which could be conducted on the Greek case. One possibility for research could focus on the social media use and news consumption habits of ordinary citizens (instead of privileged members of society) while ascertaining the extent to which their political preferences and voting behavior might be influenced by media consumption practices, both offline and online. For instance, have social media and non-mainstream information found online

perhaps *dissuaded* some eligible voters from exercising their right to vote? "Unofficial" civil society organizations offer another intriguing possibility as case studies for future research, examining all aspects of their operation, their usage of social and new media tools, and their impact on civil society and the public sphere. The discrepancy which apparently exists between the credibility crisis suffered by the mainstream media and the habitual viewing of these outlets represents another intriguing research possibility, as does an examination of voter behavior and social media usage. A before-and-after content analysis of left-wing or "anti-memorandum" media presents another possibility, in order to determine whether, and to what extent, there was a "SYRIZA effect" in their news coverage and overall political stance. Finally, the recent large-scale Macedonia rallies offer an opportunity to examine social media and to what extent social media were used as tool for organizing the rallies or publicizing them. A content analysis or discourse analysis between the coverage afforded to the Macedonia rallies by online-based media as compared to the mainstream media also presents interesting possibilities for research. Finally, future developments and a possible "generational resurgence" in Greece may warrant a look at the impact of "collective memory" and experience from participating in the public sphere, civil society, alternative media, and social movements of the past decade in Greece.

Appendix

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Title of project: From the *Polis* to Facebook: Social Media and the Development of a New Greek Public Sphere

IRB Approval: 2012-11-0041

Instructions to the interviewer:

- Make the interviewee feel comfortable and feel free to engage in discussion and small talk to develop a level of comfort.
- Explain the research project, what is being studied, the purpose of this research, and where information and excerpts from the interview will or will not be used.
- Present the IRB consent form to the participant and ask them to review it carefully and to sign it if they agree to consent.
- Ask the participant if they give permission for the interview to be recorded and for their full name to be used.
- If participants do not wish to be identified by their full name, ask what alternate name they would like to be referred to as (such as, for example, their Twitter "handle").
- Inform the interviewee that they are free to stop the interview and to cease their participation in the study at any time.
- Sign the consent form and provide a copy to the interviewee.
- The interview is semi-structured. Not every question in the questionnaire needs to be asked, depending on your own judgment, the responses of the interviewee (which may provide answers to other questions that were intended to be asked), the area(s) of expertise of the interview subject, and the overall flow of the interview.
- Feel free to insert probes, transition messages, and follow-up questions when deemed appropriate at any point in the interview, as well as to ask clarifying questions or to ask for examples, when needed.

Name of individual being interviewed:

Organization/entity:

Date:

Comments and reflective notes:

The questionnaire follows on the next page

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE – INITIAL INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS AND ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

Each interview will be semi-structured and will also include questions tailored to the individual or organization in question. In addition, certain questions from the initial approved questionnaire may be repeated, to gauge any differences in opinion or perception that may exist compared to the initial interview.

1. Thank you for participating in this study. To begin, share a few words about yourself and your (professional/journalistic/blogging/academic, etc.) background.
2. (Optional) To continue, share a few words about (the entity which the interviewee works for, e.g. newspaper, blog, political party, professional media organization, think tank, etc.).
3. How would you characterize the state of the media industry, journalism, and the Greek news industry in Greece at the present time?
4. How has the media industry developed in Greece in the past several decades?
5. Within this context, where has social media and new media fit in to the picture at the present time?
6. Is social media and new media heavily used in Greece? If so, which medium(s) is/are most popular with the Greek people?
7. What, in your opinion, accounts for the popularity of these particular mediums?
8. Are social media and new media, in your opinion, heavily used as news sources by the Greek people?
9. (If yes to above): How do you account for the popularity of social media, new media, and blogs in Greece, when at the same time, the percentage of the population with internet access is lower than in many other European countries?
10. Why have blogs, in particular, become such a popular source for news and information in Greece?
11. What factor(s) account for the popularity and success of these blogs?
12. What has the content of these blogs consisted of, and how has that content different from the news coverage offered by the mainstream media?
13. In looking at the development of blogs, and new and social media in Greece, what are some highlights in their development that you can pinpoint?
14. How has the Greek media establishment reacted to the growth in popularity of these news sources and to the increased popularity of social media?
15. Did the growth in the popularity of blogs and other new and social media lead any established media entities or any journalists to begin their own blogs and social media efforts?
16. How has the Greek political establishment reacted to the growth in popularity of blogs, social, and new media?
17. What impact has social and new media had on politics and on the political parties in Greece?
18. What has the impact of social and new media been, overall, on journalism in Greece?
19. How have social and new media, as well as blogs, impacted how the Greek people receive their news?

20. What has the impact of these new mediums of information been on political communication in Greece?
21. What has the impact of social media, new media, and blogs been on the dissemination of information in general in Greece?
22. One of the criticisms levied against some blogs is the fact that the identities of their bloggers are kept anonymous. Why have there been so many objections to anonymous blogging in Greece and what have the objections consisted of?
23. Do you believe that anonymous blogging compromises the trustworthiness or credibility of these blogs?
24. Do you believe that the Greek people, in general, consider the information that they receive from social media, new media, and blogs credible?
25. Have there been proposals to pass legislation that would outlaw anonymous blogging or curtail blogging in any way?
26. In general, has the government taken any action(s) against journalists, bloggers, or users of social media outlets?
27. In your view, are social media and new media such as blogs replacing traditional media in Greece?
28. Have traditional media, through the manner in which they cover and report the news, opened the door for these new "competitors"?
29. Are most blogs and new media outlets, in your view, truly independent of the government and of existing power structures in the country?
30. What has the role of social and new media been in terms of informing the public during the economic crisis in Greece over the past two-plus years?
31. What role did social and new media play in Greece during the recent parliamentary elections in May and June of 2012?
32. Are social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook heavily used by politicians and the political parties in Greece?
33. (If yes to the above): in what manner does the political establishment in Greece utilize these new forms of communication?
34. How would you define the concept of a public sphere?
35. Is there a public sphere in Greece? Or spheres? How has this sphere(s) developed?
36. Has such a public sphere (or spheres) existed historically in Greece?
37. Has social media impacted or changed the existing public sphere(s), or contribute to the development of a new public sphere, or spheres?
38. How has political and social discourse in Greece been impacted as a result of the development and growth in popularity of social and new media?
39. How would you describe the state of civil society in Greece historically and at the present time? Did Greece possess a developed civil society historically, and does it possess a developed civil society sphere at the present time?
40. Have social and new media, in your view, contributed to the development of civil society initiatives and organizations in Greece?
41. Do you believe that blogs, social media, and new media have contributed, specifically, to the formation of an *alternative* public sphere in Greece?

42. Have there historically been alternative and community mediums operating in Greece?
43. Have these mediums encountered any trouble with their operations and outreach to the public historically?
44. Do you consider blogs, new media (such as internet radio) and social media as "alternative" mediums of communication?
45. Has the existence and availability of social and new media enabled smaller communities, whether they are geographic communities or communities of interest, to develop in Greece?
46. Have these new mediums (social and new media) enabled alternative and community-based media to develop further in Greece, compared with prior to the existence and wide availability of these online mediums?
47. Would you consider the news blogs or any of the social or new media efforts in Greece as examples of "citizen journalism"?
48. Did "citizen journalism" efforts exist prior to the Internet age in Greece?
49. What impact do you believe social and new media might have in Greece in the future, in terms of serving as sources of news and information, and in terms of their contribution to the public sphere(s) and public discourse?
50. Finally, is there anything that you would like to add before we conclude this interview?

POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS MAY BE ASKED DEPENDING ON THE CONTEXT - EXAMPLES:

Possible additional questions to ask bloggers:

1. (To bloggers) Why did you begin blogging?
2. (To bloggers) What, in your view, can bloggers accomplish that mainstream journalists and mass media outlets cannot?
3. (To bloggers) Do you consider yourself a citizen journalist?
4. (To bloggers) What is the mission/goal of your blog?
5. (To bloggers) What are the biggest challenges you face, as a blogger?

Sample Questionnaire for Boroume illustrative example:

1. Thank you for participating in this study. To begin, share a few words about yourself and your (professional/journalistic/blogging/academic, etc.) background.
2. To continue, share a few words about Boroume, its history, its mission, and its programming.
3. Has Boroume been active on social media since its inception?
4. Why did Boroume opt to have such a heavy social media presence?
5. Strategy Boroume uses to employ social media in its efforts?
6. How have social media tools helped Boroume develop as an organization?
7. How have social media tools helped Boroume disseminate information to the public?

8. How have social media tools helped Boroume recruit volunteers?
9. Has Boroume been influenced by any previous initiatives in Greece or abroad?
10. Have there been initiatives similar to Boroume undertaken in Greece previously?
11. How do you interact with your constituents through social media? The general public?
12. Which social medium(s) does your organization use?
13. Does your outreach and manner of usage differ from one social medium to another?
14. Which social medium does your organization utilize the most, and why?
15. How do you use social media to mobilize? To organize? To inform?
16. Do you collaborate with other organizations like your own, through the use of social media?
17. Have other non-profit organizations in Greece engaged with social media in a similar manner, to your knowledge?
18. Can you share any examples of how social media has aided your organization's efforts?
19. How does Boroume use social media on a daily basis?
20. How does social media assist Boroume in its mission?
21. How would you define the concept of a public sphere?
22. Is there a public sphere in Greece? Or spheres? How has this sphere(s) developed?
23. Has such a public sphere (or spheres) existed historically in Greece?
24. Has social media impacted or changed the existing public sphere(s), or contributed to the development of a new public sphere, or spheres?
25. How has political and social discourse in Greece been impacted as a result of the development and growth in popularity of social and new media?
26. How does Boroume, and its activity in the social media realm, contribute to the public sphere?
27. How would you describe the state of civil society in Greece historically and at the present time? Did Greece possess a developed civil society historically, and does it possess a developed civil society sphere at the present time?
28. Have social and new media, in your view, contributed to the development of civil society initiatives and organizations in Greece?
29. How does Boroume, and its activity in the social media realm, contribute to civil society in Greece?
30. Has your social media activity influenced, to your knowledge, other similar initiatives and efforts elsewhere in Greece?
31. Has there been a response from the mainstream media to your organization's efforts? From others in the social media realm? From the government and/or the political parties?
32. How would you gauge the public's attitude towards social media in Greece, as a source of news, community involvement, activism, etc.
33. How does Boroume plan to utilize new online technologies in the future?

The additional questions which follow are for volunteers:

34. How did you find out about Boroume for the first time?
35. When you saw Boroume's presence on Facebook for the first time, what caught your attention about the organization?
36. For how long did you follow Boroume on Facebook before you decided to get involved?
37. From the moment that you contacted Boroume to get involved, what was the process like to actually begin to be involved as a volunteer?
38. As a volunteer, what do you do at Boroume?
39. Since you mentioned involvement in some of the web aspects of Boroume, are you involved at all in Boroume's social media efforts?

Sample Questionnaire for *enikos.gr* illustrative example:

1. Thank you for participating in this study. To begin, share a few words about yourself and your (professional/journalistic/blogging/academic, etc.) background.
2. To continue, share a few words about *enikos.gr*.
3. What was the idea behind *enikos.gr*? When was it developed?
4. What void do you believe *enikos.gr* filled within the Greek media landscape?
5. *enikos.gr* could be described as being a combination of traditional media and new media, with a well-known and experienced journalist. Would you consider *enikos.gr* traditional or new, and how do you straddle the line between the two?
6. The layout of *enikos.gr* resembles many well known blogs in Greece. Was this purposeful on the part of *enikos.gr*?
7. What is your organizational strategy in using social and new media? Which mediums do you use the most or least? Facebook? Twitter?
8. In what way is *enikos.gr*'s web TV station an alternative to broadcast television programming, in your view?
9. Are social media and new media, in your opinion, heavily used as news sources by the Greek people?
10. Social media and new media such as blogs have become quite popular in Greece over the past several years. What accounts for their popularity in your view?
11. Why have blogs, in particular, become such a popular source for news and information in Greece?
12. Is the growing popularity of social media and new media as a news source a result of a decline in the perceived credibility of "traditional" media?
13. Which types of social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) do you perceive as being the most popular with the Greek people?
14. What, in your opinion, accounts for the popularity of these particular mediums?
15. What factor(s) account for the popularity and success of news blogs in Greece?
16. Did the success of Greek news blogs influence the decision to establish *enikos.gr*?
17. What has the content of these blogs consisted of, and how has that content different from the news coverage offered by the mainstream media?

18. Do you consider the information that is found in the social and new media sphere more broadly as credible?
19. In looking at *enikos.gr* in particular, do you believe that the general public finds it to be a credible source for news?
20. In looking at the development of blogs, and new and social media in Greece, what are some highlights in their development that you can pinpoint?
21. How has the Greek media establishment reacted to the growth in popularity of these news sources and to the increased popularity of social media?
22. How has the Greek political establishment reacted to the growth in popularity of blogs, social, and new media?
23. What impact has social and new media had on politics and on the political parties in Greece?
24. What has the impact of social and new media been, overall, on journalism in Greece?
25. How have social and new media, as well as blogs, impacted how the Greek people receive their news?
26. What has the impact of social media, new media, and blogs been on the dissemination of information in general in Greece?
27. One of the criticisms levied against some blogs is the fact that the identities of their bloggers are kept anonymous. Why have there been so many objections to anonymous blogging in Greece and what have the objections consisted of?
28. Do you believe that anonymous blogging compromises the trustworthiness or credibility of these blogs?
29. In your view, are social media and new media such as blogs replacing traditional media in Greece?
30. Have traditional media, through the manner in which they cover and report the news, opened the door for these new "competitors"?
31. Are most blogs and new media outlets, in your view, truly independent of the government and of existing power structures in the country?
32. What has the role of social and new media been in terms of informing the public during the economic crisis in Greece?
33. What role did social and new media play in Greece during the recent parliamentary elections in May and June of 2012?
34. There have been high profile instances recently of journalists and bloggers being arrested for stories and items that they have published. Do you believe that journalism faces any dangers from the government in Greece at the present time?
35. How would you define the concept of a public sphere?
36. Is there a public sphere in Greece? Or spheres? How has this sphere(s) developed?
37. Has such a public sphere (or spheres) existed historically in Greece?
38. Has social media impacted or changed the existing public sphere(s), or contributed to the development of a new public sphere, or spheres?
39. How has political and social discourse in Greece been impacted as a result of the development and growth in popularity of social and new media?

40. How would you describe the state of civil society in Greece historically and at the present time? Did Greece possess a developed civil society historically, and does it possess a developed civil society sphere at the present time?
41. Have social and new media, in your view, contributed to the development of civil society initiatives and organizations in Greece?
42. Has social media impacted or changed the existing public sphere(s), or contributed to the development of a new public sphere, or spheres?
43. How has political and social discourse in Greece been impacted as a result of the development and growth in popularity of social and new media?
44. Do you believe that blogs, social media, and new media have contributed, specifically, to the formation of an alternative public sphere in Greece?
45. Do you consider *enikos.gr* to be an alternative to the existing mainstream media in Greece? If so, in what way?
46. Do you believe *enikos.gr* has made a contribution to the public sphere (or spheres) in Greece, and if so, how?
47. What do you know about your online users? Number of visits, age groups, where they come from, what other sites they read, etc.
48. How does enikos.gr engage with its users? Are comments and feedback encouraged? Are they taken into account in news production?
49. How many postings are made on *enikos.gr* per day?
50. What is the average viewership of *enikos.gr*'s web TV station?
51. Through which social medium(s) are your readers/viewers most engaged?
52. How has *enikos.gr* made an impact on the Greek public sphere? Name specific instances.
53. How has your coverage of major stories differed from the coverage afforded by the major media towards those same stories?
54. In general, what can blogs and new/social media, in your view, accomplish that traditional mainstream media cannot?
55. Do you consider *enikos.gr* to be a mainstream medium, an alternative medium, complementary to mainstream media?
56. What impact do you believe social and new media might have in Greece in the future, in terms of serving as sources of news and information, and in terms of their contribution to the public sphere(s) and public discourse?
57. How does *enikos.gr* plan to utilize new online technologies in the future?

Sample Questionnaire for the Independent Greeks political party

1. Thank you for participating in this study. To begin, share a few words about yourself and your (professional/journalistic/blogging/academic, etc.) background.
2. To continue, share a few words about the Independent Greeks political party, how the party was founded, and its mission.
3. How would you define the concept of a public sphere?
4. Is there a public sphere in Greece? Or spheres? How has this sphere(s) developed?
5. Has such a public sphere (or spheres) existed historically in Greece?

6. Has social media impacted or changed the existing public sphere(s), or contributed to the development of a new public sphere, or spheres?
7. How has political and social discourse in Greece been impacted as a result of the development and growth in popularity of social and new media?
8. How would you describe the state of civil society in Greece historically and at the present time? Did Greece possess a developed civil society historically, and does it possess a developed civil society sphere at the present time?
9. Have social and new media, in your view, contributed to the development of civil society initiatives and organizations in Greece?
10. What contribution does your political party make to the public sphere in Greece? What contributions has it made that were previously absent from the public sphere?
11. What is the importance of social media in your party's overall communication's strategy?
12. How does your party interact with the public through social and new media platforms?
13. Does the feedback you receive from the public via social and new media platforms impact your party's policies or its campaigning?
14. How many people are involved in your party's social and new media efforts? Is there a dedicated social and new media team?
15. How would you compare your party's activity on social and new media to those of the other parties in parliament?
16. How would you describe the nature of political discourse in Greece today, and what has changed with the advent of the internet and social media?
17. Do you believe that Greek society, as a whole, finds the internet and social media a more trustworthy source of news and information, including political news and information, compared to traditional mass media outlets?
18. Do you believe that the mass media in Greece is suffering from a credibility crisis, and if so, why do you believe that this is the case?
19. How has the mass media covered the activities of the Independent Greeks political party since its inception?
20. The Independent Greeks became widely known in Greek society as the "party of Facebook," as it was essentially founded via Facebook and because it was especially active on Facebook in the first months of its existence. What was your party's strategy in using Facebook to engage with the public immediately after your launch?
21. What were some specific ways in which the Independent Greeks engaged with the Greek public after the party's inception? For instance, I recall that online polls were heavily utilized.
22. How does party leader Panos Kammenos, who is known to be active on social media, utilize social mediums to communicate with the public?
23. Do you believe that Mr. Kammenos' often outspoken usage of social media tools to communicate with the public has helped the Independent Greeks attract voters and supporters?
24. Are there other elected officials or public figures from the Independent Greeks who are particularly active users of social and new media?

25. (For elected officials/MPs): How do you personally use social and new media to interact with voters and the public?
26. (For elected officials/MPs): Do you personally communicate with the public using these social media tools, or does an adviser or some other individual with expertise in social media utilize these tools on your behalf?
27. (For elected officials/MPs): How much time during your day is dedicated to interacting with constituents via social media?
28. What impact do you believe you/your party's use of social media have had on the party's popularity and public perception?
29. Does your party have a specific policy for how MPs and its representatives can utilize social and new media?
30. Are there any particular mediums which the Independent Greeks specifically prefers or finds to be most effective for your social media outreach efforts, and why?
31. Can you highlight some specific ways in which social media has significantly benefited or impacted the party?
32. How did the party utilize social and new media during the recent parliamentary elections in May and June of 2012?
33. Did the party's communications and social media strategy change between the two electoral contests? If so, what changed?
34. Do you believe your party's electoral success can be, at least in part, attributed to your presence on social and new media?
35. How would you characterize the manner in which other major political parties in Greece have utilized social and new media in their communications and outreach efforts?
36. Which political parties, in your view, make the most or the least effective usage of social and new media?
37. Were the Independent Greeks influenced in any way from the manner in which social and new media have been utilized by political parties and electoral campaigns in other countries?
38. How do the Independent Greeks plan to utilize new online technologies in the future, such as prior to the next electoral contest?

Sample Questionnaire for Radiobubble illustrative example:

1. Thank you for participating in this study. To begin, share a few words about yourself and your (professional/journalistic/blogging/academic, etc.) background.
2. To continue, share a few words about Radiobubble, its history, its mission, and its programming.
3. What makes Radiobubble different from other internet radio stations?
4. What makes Radiobubble different from mainstream media outlets?
5. How would you define the concept of a public sphere?
6. Is there a public sphere in Greece? Or spheres? How has this sphere(s) developed?
7. Has such a public sphere (or spheres) existed historically in Greece?

8. Has social media impacted or changed the existing public sphere(s), or contributed to the development of a new public sphere, or spheres?
9. How has political and social discourse in Greece been impacted as a result of the development and growth in popularity of social and new media?
10. How has Radiobubble contributed to the public sphere in Greece?
11. Which social mediums are most heavily used by Radiobubble?
12. How do you personally interact with your listeners using social media? Do you prefer any particular medium and why?
13. Aside from your involvement with Radiobubble, how else do you use social and new media in your daily life?
14. How does Radiobubble in general interact with its listeners and community using social media tools?
15. Are the different social mediums used differently by Radiobubble?
16. How do Radiobubble's DJs incorporate social media into their programming?
17. Do you consider social media and new media more broadly as credible sources of information?
18. Do you believe the public considers these mediums credible?
19. Who is Radiobubble's audience?
20. How has Radiobubble made an impact on this audience?
21. What has the attitude of the political system towards mediums like Radiobubble been like?
22. Have there been any attempts to censor or disrupt Radiobubble's operations in any way? Any legislation that restricts your activities in any way?
23. How would you describe the state of civil society in Greece historically and at the present time? Did Greece possess a developed civil society historically, and does it possess a developed civil society sphere at the present time?
24. Have social and new media, in your view, contributed to the development of civil society initiatives and organizations in Greece?
25. How has Radiobubble made contributions to civil society?
26. What are some civil society efforts, if any, which have arisen out of Radiobubble's efforts?
27. How does someone become a member of Radiobubble and a programmer?
28. Would you describe the Radiobubble café space as an example of the public sphere? Who are the patrons? What is typically discussed?
29. What sorts of events does the station organize and how do they contribute to civil society or to the public sphere?
30. Recent events in Greece: journalist arrests – journalism and free speech threatened? What role does a station like Radiobubble play in this environment?
31. Foreign twitter feed: idea and philosophy behind this?
32. Who is the audience for the English-language twitter feed?
33. Why did Radiobubble create a twitter in English?
34. How does Radiobubble respond to pressing social issues such as racism and violence, or to issues pertaining to the economic crisis?

35. How would you define citizen journalism, and is what you do at Radiobubble citizen journalism, in your view?
36. How does Radiobubble plan to utilize new online technologies in the future?

Sample Questionnaire for the Skai Media Group illustrative example:

1. Thank you for participating in this study. To begin, share a few words about yourself and your (professional/journalistic/blogging/academic, etc.) background.
2. To continue, share a few words about the Skai Media Group and the media outlets that it comprises.
3. How do the Skai Media Group's various media outlets position themselves within the Greek media landscape?
4. What is your organizational strategy in using social and new media? Which mediums do you use the most or least? Facebook? Twitter?
5. Are social media and new media, in your opinion, heavily used as news sources by the Greek people?
6. Social media and new media such as blogs have become quite popular in Greece over the past several years. What accounts for their popularity in your view?
7. Why have blogs, in particular, become such a popular source for news and information in Greece?
8. Is the growing popularity of social media and new media as a news source a result of a decline in the perceived credibility of "traditional" media?
9. Which types of social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) do you perceive as being the most popular with the Greek people?
10. What, in your opinion, accounts for the popularity of these particular mediums?
11. What factor(s) account for the popularity and success of news blogs in Greece?
12. What has the content of these blogs consisted of, and how has that content different from the news coverage offered by the mainstream media?
13. Do you consider the information that is found in the social and new media sphere more broadly as credible?
14. How do news blogs compete with the operations of professional, commercial news operations such as those of the Skai Media Group?
15. In looking at the Skai Media Group's news outlets in particular, do you believe that the general public finds your news outlets to be a credible source for news and information?
16. Do you believe that the mainstream media in Greece are suffering from a credibility crisis, and if so, why?
17. What impact has social and new media had on the political landscape in Greece?
18. What has the impact of social and new media been, overall, on journalism in Greece?
19. How have social and new media, as well as blogs, impacted how the Greek people receive their news?
20. What has the impact of social media, new media, and blogs been on the dissemination of information in general in Greece?

21. One of the criticisms levied against some blogs is the fact that the identities of their bloggers are kept anonymous. Why have there been so many objections to anonymous blogging in Greece and what have the objections consisted of?
22. Do you believe that anonymous blogging compromises the trustworthiness or credibility of these blogs?
23. In your view, are social media and new media such as blogs replacing traditional media in Greece?
24. Have traditional media, through the manner in which they cover and report the news, opened the door for these new "competitors"?
25. Are most blogs and new media outlets, in your view, truly independent of the government and of existing power structures in the country?
26. What has the role of social and new media been in terms of informing the public during the economic crisis in Greece?
27. What role did social and new media play in Greece during the recent parliamentary elections in May and June of 2012?
28. There have been high profile instances recently of journalists and bloggers being arrested for stories and items that they have published. Do you believe that journalism faces any dangers from the government in Greece at the present time?
29. How would you define the concept of a public sphere?
30. Is there a public sphere in Greece? Or spheres? How has this sphere(s) developed?
31. Has such a public sphere (or spheres) existed historically in Greece?
32. Has social media impacted or changed the existing public sphere(s), or contributed to the development of a new public sphere, or spheres?
33. How has political and social discourse in Greece been impacted as a result of the development and growth in popularity of social and new media?
34. Has social media impacted or changed the existing public sphere(s), or contributed to the development of a new public sphere, or spheres?
35. How has political and social discourse in Greece been impacted as a result of the development and growth in popularity of social and new media?
36. Do you believe that blogs, social media, and new media have contributed, specifically, to the formation of an alternative public sphere in Greece?
37. In what way do you believe that the Skai Media Group contributes to the Greek public sphere?
38. What do you know about your online users? Number of visits, age groups, where they come from, what other sites they read, etc.
39. How does the Skai Media Group engage with its online users? Are comments and feedback encouraged? Are they taken into account in news production?
40. What other metrics can you share from Skai Media Group's online presence?
41. Through which social medium(s) are your readers/viewers most engaged?
42. In general, what can blogs and new/social media, in your view, accomplish that traditional mainstream media cannot?
43. How would you describe the state of civil society in Greece historically and at the present time? Did Greece possess a developed civil society historically, and does it possess a developed civil society sphere at the present time?

44. Have social and new media, in your view, contributed to the development of civil society initiatives and organizations in Greece?
45. Describe the Skai Media Group's civil society efforts, as part of your organization's social responsibility efforts.
46. How does the Skai Media Group utilize social and new media to promote and to disseminate information about these civil society initiatives?
47. What impact do you believe social and new media might have in Greece in the future, in terms of serving as sources of news and information, and in terms of their contribution to the public sphere(s) and public discourse?
48. How does the Skai Media Group plan to utilize new online technologies in the future?

APPENDIX 3: Follow-up Questionnaire – Sample Questions

Each interview will be semi-structured and will also include questions tailored to the individual or organization in question. In addition, certain questions from the initial approved questionnaire may be repeated, to gauge any differences in opinion or perception that may exist compared to the initial interview.

General Follow-Up Interview Questions:

1. How is the term "citizen" defined in Greece, in your view? What is a "citizen," in the Greek context?
2. In your opinion, are the problems and challenges ordinary citizens face on a daily basis in Greece reflected in the content of the conventional mass media in Greece (television, radio, newspapers)?
3. In your view, have social media and online media done a better or a worse job in bringing the concerns and challenges Greek citizens face to the public eye?
4. In your opinion, do ordinary Greek citizens have any impact on the content of the conventional mass media in Greece? In the shaping of legislation regulating media and broadcasting in Greece?
5. Do you believe that free speech, especially on political issues, is effectively protected in Greece?
6. In your belief, is there a "democratic deficit" in Greece?
7. Who do you believe are the major influencers of the public sphere, public debate, and public discourse in Greece?

   Follow-up: Is their impact positive or negative, in your view?

8. Does the conventional mass media in Greece, in your opinion, perform a role as a political or economic or social "watchdog" on behalf of the public?
9. Do you believe the conventional mass media in Greece ever fulfilled the media "watchdog" role on behalf of the public, acting as the "fourth estate"?
10. Do social or online media perform a role as a political or economic or social "watchdog" on behalf of the public, in your opinion, and if so, do you believe that they are more effective in this role than the conventional mass media?
11. Do you believe that there are certain voices, political perspectives, or social groups which are systematically excluded from participation in public discourse and dialogue, by the conventional mass media in Greece (television, radio, newspapers)?
12. How would you gauge the role of public opinion polling firms in Greece? In your view, do they operate in an objective and neutral manner? Are the results of public opinion polling, in your view, fair and objective?
13. Do you believe that public opinion polling in Greece is politically tainted or biased?
14. Do you believe there are other effective ways of measuring public opinion and public sentiment on matters of political, economic, or social importance in Greece?

15. Does social media or online media provide any effective ways of gauging public opinion in Greece, in your view?
16. Do you believe that professional journalists in Greece operate according to the norms of journalistic objectivity and fairness?
17. In your opinion, what role did the conventional media play prior to the January 2015 parliamentary elections in Greece and SYRIZA's subsequent rise to power?
18. In your view, what role did social media and online media play prior to the January 2015 parliamentary elections in Greece and SYRIZA's subsequent rise to power?
19. What differences existed, in your view, in the content and quality of political and public discourse regarding the elections, prior to the January 2015 parliamentary elections in Greece?
20. In your opinion, did social and online media help or hurt SYRIZA in its rise to power, or do you believe they did not have an impact?
21. In your view, how did the conventional mass media impact the ascension into parliament for the following political parties? a) To Potami, b) Independent Greeks, c) Centrists' Union
22. In your view, how did social media and online media impact the ascension into parliament for the following political parties? a) To Potami, b) Independent Greeks, c) Centrists' Union
23. In your view, which political party (or parties) in Greece makes most effective use of social media and online media tools? Which political party (or parties) is least effective, in your view?
24. In your opinion, what role did the conventional media play prior to the September 2015 parliamentary elections in Greece and SYRIZA's repeat victory?
25. In your view, what role did social media and online media play prior to the September 2015 parliamentary elections in Greece and SYRIZA's repeat victory?
26. How has the SYRIZA-led government utilized or not utilized social, online, and other new media as part of its governance?
27. In your view, have there been changes to the public sphere or in public discourse in Greece following SYRIZA's ascension to power?
28. In your opinion, what role did the conventional media play in influencing public opinion prior to the July 2015 referendum in Greece?

    Follow-up: Do you believe that the conventional media's stance prior to the referendum impacted its credibility?

29. In your view, what was the role of social media and online media in influencing public opinion and public debate prior to the July 2015 referendum?
30. In your view, how did the shutdown of state broadcaster ERT and the subsequent launch of its replacement, NERIT, impact the public sphere and public discourse in Greece, and if so, how? Did the reopening of ERT in spring 2015, in turn, impact the public sphere and public discourse in Greece—and if so, how?

31. Would you characterize ERT as a "state" broadcasting company or as a "public" broadcasting company, and why? What do you perceive is the difference between the two categorizations?
32. In your belief, do social media or online media serve as effective alternatives to the conventional mass media system, or have they replicated it?
33. In your view, have social media or online media contributed to an increased diversity of viewpoints present in the Greek public sphere
34. Is there still a "digital divide" in Greece in your view, and if so, what is its impact?
35. Demographically, which social groups are, in your opinion, most likely to get their news from television? From newspapers? From online sources?
36. Do you believe there are any truly alternative sources of news and information in the Greek internet or blogosphere? If so, can you name some of these alternatives and why you believe they are "alternative" to conventional media outlets?
37. In your opinion, why did the massive protest movement succeed in 2011 while other similar efforts at organizing mass gatherings have largely failed since then?
38. What has been the role of social media and online media, in your view, in the growth and subsequent demise of these public social movements?
39. In your view, have social media and online media contributed to the growth and development of the public sphere (or public spheres) in Greece in the past five years?
40. In your opinion, have social media and online media contributed to the growth and development of civil society in Greece in the past five years?

Illustrative Example Follow-Up Questions (in addition to questions above):

Boroume:

1. How has Boroume been using social media and new media and recent years, and what has changed in the past few years, since 2012-13 when we last spoke?
2. Overall, how has your organization grown and changed during this time period?
3. To what extent is social media still useful for your organization in recruiting volunteers?
4. Beyond just Boroume, looking at the non-profit sector and civil society, what impact is social and new media having on the sector overall, and what has changed in recent years?
5. Why do you believe certain social mediums, such as Twitter, are not considered relevant in Greece?
6. Looking at society in general, and not just civil society, with everything that has been happening in Greece politically and otherwise, what role have social and new media been playing in the public sphere?
7. In general, how would you say that the public sphere has evolved in Greece over the past few years, and in the midst of the economic crisis?
8. There has long been a perception that civil society in Greece was not as developed as in other Western societies. Do you believe that this has changed and that civil society has developed in recent years in Greece? If it has been improving, is it as a result of the economic crisis?
9. What do you believe is Boroume's contribution to Greek civil society today?

10. In what areas do you believe there is still a gap, between the civil society of Greece and other Western societies?
11. Would you say that there is still a suspicion or a lack of trust of ordinary Greeks towards the "third sector" in Greece at this time?
12. Overall, what would you say that the impact and relevance of social media and new media is in general in Greek society, at this time?
13. Do you believe that a high percentage of Greeks receive news and information about what is happening in their society, from social and new media?
14. Looking to the future, how do you foresee social media and new media in your organizational efforts?

enikos.gr

1. Describe the operations of *enikos.gr* today and the manner in which it uses social and new media tools in its day-to-day operations.
2. What social and new media tools are utilized by *enikos.gr* today? Are other tools used aside from Facebook and Twitter?
3. How has the usage of these social media tools by *enikos.gr* evolved in recent years, since the 2012-13 time period?
4. How would you describe *enikos.gr*'s contribution to the Greek public sphere today, in your
   view?
5. Does *enikos.gr* maintain a "blog format" in its operations, and if so, why have you chosen to maintain this format?
6. In general, how would you say that the public sphere has evolved in Greece over the past few years, and in the midst of the economic crisis?
7. What is *enikos.gr*'s current relationship with the other media endeavors of its founder, journalist Nikos Chatzinikolaou?
8. How does *enikos.gr* differentiate itself from the other media outlets owned or operated by Mr. Chatzinikolaou? How does the news content of *enikos.gr* differ from the content found in these mediums?
9. Do you believe that a majority of the Greek public now relies upon social and new (online) media in order to receive news and information?
10. Do you believe that the Greek "traditional" media (e.g. television, radio, print) are suffering from a credibility crisis, on the part of the general public?
11. How many people are involved in the social and new media efforts of *enikos.gr*?
12. To what extent have social and new media contributed to the changes in Greece's political landscape in recent years?
13. Are news blogs still an influential or popular source of news and information in Greece today? What has changed in the past decade and what is its impact on the public sphere?
14. Have online news portals supplanted blogs in popularity in Greece?
15. How would you characterize the relationship between the traditional mass media in Greece with the dissemination of news and information via online means today?

16. Are there plans to relaunch Mr. Chatzinikolaou's television program? Will this relaunch take place in a web TV format once again?
17. Looking to the future, how do you foresee social media and new media in your organizational efforts?

Independent Greeks:

1. Describe for us how the Independent Greeks utilize social and new media tools today. Which social media tools does your party use (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram)? Have there been any changes since the 2012-2014 time period?
2. In general, how would you say that the public sphere has evolved in Greece over the past few years, and in the midst of the economic crisis?
3. Are there differences in the ways in which each of these social media tools is utilized by the Independent Greeks? For instance, what might be the differences in how your party utilizes Facebook versus Twitter?
4. Approximately how many friends/followers does the party have from each of the social media tools which are utilized?
5. How did the Independent Greeks utilize social and new media tools prior to the January 2015 elections, and prior to the September 2015 elections? Were there differences in how social and new media were utilized in these two electoral contests?
6. Do you believe that social and new media tools helped or hurt your party's campaign efforts prior to the January 2015 elections? Prior to the September 2015 elections?
7. How did conventional media outlets (television, newspapers, radio) cover your party's pre-election campaign efforts prior to the January 2015 and September 2015 elections?
8. How has your party utilized social and new media tools as part of its participation in two successive coalition governments since January 2015?
9. How has the manner in which the Independent Greeks utilize social media changed ever since the party became part of the coalition government? Overall, how has the manner in which the Independent Greeks have utilized social media changed today, as compared to when the party was not in government (in 2012-2014)?
10. How would you gauge the stance of conventional media outlets towards your party during its tenure as part of the coalition government of Greece?
11. How do the Independent Greeks plan to utilize social and new media in the next elections? What differences might be implemented compared to previous electoral contests?
12. The Independent Greeks initially developed a reputation as the "party of Facebook"—as a political party that was born out of social media. Do you believe that this characterization is still applicable to your party in terms of how it operates today?
13. How did the party's early beginnings on social media, particularly Facebook, shape its political and policy platform?
14. Does the party still engage in interactive communication with the public via social and new media? What are some examples?
15. How do individual MPs and members of the party (such as party leader Panos Kammenos) utilize social and new media outlets today? Has anything changed in terms

of how they utilize social and new media tools, compared to when the party was not in government?
16. Are there guidelines which the party has implemented in terms of how its elected officials can or cannot use social and new media?
17. What differences may exist in terms of how the Independent Greeks utilize social and new media, as compared to your majority partner in the coalition government, SYRIZA?
18. How many people are part of the party's social and new media efforts? Is there a dedicated social and new media team?
19. Overall, what do you believe the impact of social and new media is in Greece's public/political sphere and public discourse today? Do you believe that there have been changes in the Greek public sphere in the past two years (since January 2015) as compared to the previous period, as a result of the impact of social and new media?
20. Do you believe that a majority of the Greek public now relies upon social and new (online) media in order to receive news and information?
21. How were social and new media utilized by the Independent Greeks in the two national electoral contests of 2015 (in January and September)?
22. What was the contribution of your party's social and new media efforts in helping to get the party elected into parliament and invited to form a coalition government with SYRIZA?
23. How have the Independent Greeks utilized social media during the time that they have been a minority partner in the coalition government of Greece? Has the party changed or altered the manner in which it uses social media, now that it is a part of the national government?
24. Looking to the future, how do you foresee social media and new media in your organizational efforts, such us in upcoming electoral contests?

Radiobubble:

1. What is your specific role and involvement in Radiobubble today?
2. In general, how would you say that the public sphere has evolved in Greece over the past few years, and in the midst of the economic crisis?
3. What do you believe Radiobubble's contribution to the Greek public sphere today is, and how does your usage of social and new media bolster this contribution?
4. There has long been a perception that civil society in Greece was not as developed as in other Western societies. Do you believe that this has changed and that civil society has developed in recent years in Greece? If it has been improving, is it as a result of the economic crisis?
5. Numerous civil society initiatives, such as Tutorpool and Hackacademy, were borne out of Radiobubble in recent years. Are these initiatives still active? Have new initiatives developed?
6. How would you gauge Radiobubble's contribution to Greek civil society today?
7. In general, how would you say that the public sphere has evolved in Greece over the past few years, and in the midst of the economic crisis?

8. From what I understand, Radiobubble has experienced some difficulties in the recent period. What has changed in the manner in which the radio station now operates and is organized?
9. Has there been a shift in emphasis away from the usage of social media on the part of Radiobubble, and if so, why is this the case?
10. Has there been a reduction in news production on the part of Radiobubble, and if so, why is this the case?
11. Does Twitter remain the primary social medium that is utilized by Radiobubble today?
12. What types of content does Radiobubble upload and publish via online and social media platforms, and has anything changed in recent years?
13. Does Radiobubble still represent an example of citizens' journalism in your view?
14. Radiobubble is now officially registered as a collective. Has anything changed in terms of the organizational structure of Radiobubble or its operations as a result?
15. Radiobubble's physical space has changed in recent years, from the café that it used to occupy, to a space that is not as publicly accessible. How has this change impacted Radiobubble, its operations, and its visibility to the public?
16. Initially, Radiobubble gained popularity during the 2010-2012 time period, in part due to its Twitter feed. How does Radiobubble cover important news items and protests, and how have the recent electoral contests been covered? How did this coverage differ compared to other media outlets?
17. There has arguably been a decline in protest activity in Greece in recent years. To what factors do you attribute this decline?
18. How has Radiobubble reported on other hot-button or controversial issues in Greece in recent years, such as the migrant crisis, and how has this coverage differed, in your view, from the coverage provided by mainstream media outlets?
19. Does Radiobubble still translate its Greek news content into other languages?
20. Could you provide metrics as to how many people listen to the station, visit the website, and follow Radiobubble via different platforms?
21. How does Radiobubble utilize Twitter hashtags in its news reporting and social media efforts today? From what I understand, aside from #rbnews, there is now a new hashtag that is in use by your station, #antireport.
22. When did this separation between the two hashtags occur?
23. Are there specific guidelines which Radiobubble maintains, for the proper usage of each hashtag?
24. What are the differences in which different social mediums, such as Facebook as compared to Twitter, are used by Radiobubble?
25. Are other social media tools used by Radiobubble, other than Twitter and Facebook?
26. How many individuals are involved, in total, in Radiobubble's efforts and operations today? How many individuals are specifically involved with Radiobubble's news team? Has this number changed since the 2012-13 time period?
27. Looking to the future, how do you foresee social media and new media in your organizational efforts?

Skai:

1. Which social media and new media tools does Skai Media Group utilize today? Have there been any changes since the 2012-2014 time period?
2. Which social media and new media tools are utilized the most/least by Skai Media Group, and are there differences in how each medium is used? (For example, how might Facebook be used differently from Twitter?)
3. How do social and new media contribute to Skai Media Group's overall communications strategy?
4. Does Skai Media Group engage in interactive communication with the public via social and new media? (e.g. via comments, polls, hashtags, etc.)
5. How do Skai Media Group's specific media outlets (e.g. Skai TV, Skai Radio, Melodia FM, Sport FM, etc.) utilize social and new media in their own way?
6. How many people are involved in Skai's social and new media efforts?
7. How do individual television or radio programs or personalities within the Skai Media Group utilize social and new media?
8. How do Skai Media Group's social/new media/online efforts differentiate themselves from what Skai offers via "traditional" media (e.g. television, radio, print)?
9. Do you believe that a majority of the Greek public now relies upon social and new (online) media in order to receive news and information?
10. Do you believe that the Greek "traditional" media (e.g. television, radio, print) are suffering from a credibility crisis, on the part of the general public? If so, what is Skai Media Group attempting to do to combat this credibility crisis and how does social/new media contribute to these efforts?
11. Does Skai Media Group view the overall social/new media sphere (including, for instance, online news portals, blogs, citizen journalism, online radio, etc.) as "competition" to its own media outlets and its own social/new media presence?
12. What do you believe is your organization's/entity's contribution to the Greek public sphere? How does your usage of social media and online media tools bolster this contribution?
13. Skai Media Group is also involved in social responsibility initiatives such as "Oloi Mazi Mboroume." In what way do you believe these social responsibility initiatives contribute to Greek civil society, and how do social and new media contribute to these efforts?
14. Looking to the future, how do you foresee social media and new media in your organizational efforts?
15. Overall, what role do you believe that social and new media play in terms of contributing to the Greek public sphere today?

ELECTRONIC SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

SAMPLE POPULATIONS:

Sample Population	Responses	Questionnaires Sent	Participation Rate	CODE
Chief editors of major newspapers[64]	10	14	71.43%	Editors
Members of the European Parliament[65]	7	21	33.33%	Euro MPs
Representatives of civil society organizations[66]	6	51	11.76%	Civil Society
TOTALS	**23**	**86**	**26.74%**	***The above codes are used in the tables below***

SURVEY DETAILS:

- Conducted online via the *Limesurvey* platform.
- Survey period: December 1, 2014 – March 15, 2015

[64] Official circulation figures from the week of September 1-7, 2014 were used, including the six highest-circulating daily afternoon newspapers, the highest-circulating daily morning newspaper, the four highest-circulating Sunday-only newspapers, and the highest-circulating weekly newspaper. In addition, daily broadsheet *Kathimerini* was also included in the sample, even though its circulation figures (which are comparable to the country's most popular newspapers) were, until May 2017, were not included in the figures provided by the official "Europe" Greek press distribution agency, but only published in Sunday editions of *Kathimerini*. Tabloid newspaper *Espresso*, despite relatively high circulation figures, was not included, due to its focus on celebrity and lifestyle news. Circulation data can be found at http://content-mcdn.feed.gr/pegasus/Multimedia/pdf/PDP_20140901.pdf and http://content-mcdn.feed.gr/pegasus/Multimedia/pdf/PWP_201436.pdf.

[65] Official results of the 2014 European parliamentary election in Greece are available at http://ekloges-prev.singularlogic.eu/may2014/e/public/index.html#{"cls":"main","params":{}}.

[66] The selection of organizations comprising this sample consisted of all relevant organizations which could be located in the two randomly selected Greek prefectures outside of the Attica (Athens) region, Korinthia and Evia, via the enallaktikos.gr, which following an investigation into various online catalogs, was found to offer the most complete and detailed listing of civil society, grassroots, and citizens' groups in each prefecture of Greece.

A. INTRODUCTION

A1: What is your age?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Male	45.8	52.0	38.0	45.44
Female	50.0	45.7	42.5	46.00
AVERAGE	46.7	49.3	39.5	**45.61**
1st quartile (Q1): 28. 2nd quartile (Median): 46. 3rd quartile (Q3): 53. Maximum: 63.				

A2: State your gender

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Male	8 (80.0%)	4 (57.1%)	4 (66.7%)	**16 (69.57%)**
Female	2 (20.0%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (33.3%)	**7 (30.43%)**

B. POLITICAL PREFERENCE

B1: Which political party did you support/vote for in this year's European parliamentary Elections?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	3 (30.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**7 (30.43%)**
New Democracy	-	2 (28.6%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
KKE	2 (20.0%)	-	-	**2 (8.70%)**
Golden Dawn	-	2 (28.6%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
Elia (PASOK)	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
To Potami	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (EPAM)	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
Indepenedent Greeks	-	-	-	**0 (0.00%)**
DIMAR	-	-	-	**0 (0.00%)**
None	-	-	2 (33.3%)	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	4 (40.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**5 (21.74%)**

B2: Which political party did you support/vote for in this year's local and municipal elections in Greece?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**4 (17.39%)**
Elia (PASOK)	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
Independent candidate	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
Golden Dawn	-	2 (28.6%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
New Democracy	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
KKE	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (ANTARSYA)	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
To Potami	-	-	-	**0 (0.00%)**
None	1 (10.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**3 (13.04%)**
No answer	4 (40.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**

B3: Which party did you vote for in the 2009 European parliamentary elections?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	2 (20.0%)	-	3 (50.0%)	**5 (21.74%)**
New Democracy	-	3 (42.9%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
PASOK	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
Golden Dawn	-	2 (28.6%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
KKE	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
None	1 (10.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**3 (13.04%)**
No answer	4 (40.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**

B4: Which party did you vote for in the 2010 local/municipal elections in Greece?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	1 (10.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**3 (13.04%)**
New Democracy	-	2 (28.6%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
PASOK	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
KKE	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
Golden Dawn	-	2 (28.6%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
Independent candidate	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
DIMAR	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
None	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	4 (40.0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (16.7%)	**7 (30.43%)**

B5: Which party did you vote for in the national parliamentary elections of May 2012?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	3 (30%)	1 (14.3%)	3 (50.0%)	**7 (30.43%)**
Elia (PASOK)	1 (10%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
Golden Dawn	-	2 (28.6%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
New Democracy	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
KKE	1 (10%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
DIMAR	1 (10%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (EPAM)	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (LAOS)	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
None	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
No answer	4 (40%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**

B6: Which party did you vote for in the national parliamentary elections of June 2012?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	3 (30%)		2 (33.3%)	**5 (21.74%)**
New Democracy	-	2 (28.6%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
Elia (PASOK)	1 (10%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
Golden Dawn	-	2 (28.6%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
KKE	1 (10%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
DIMAR	1 (10%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (EPAM)*	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (LAOS)	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Did not vote	-	-	2 (33.3%)	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	4 (40%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**

** - EPAM did not participate in the June 2012 parliamentary elections, but was listed by one respondent.*

C. PERSONAL USAGE OF SOCIAL AND NEW MEDIA TOOLS

C1: Do you use any social media tools?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	8 (80.0%)	7 (100.0%)	5 (83.3%)	**20 (86.96%)**
No	-	-	-	-
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**

C2: Which social media tools do you use at least once per week? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Facebook	8 (80.0%)	7 (100.0%)	6 (100.0%)	**21 (91.30%)**
Twitter	9 (90.0%)	4 (58.6%)	3 (50.0%)	**16 (69.57%)**
YouTube	5 (50.0%)	4 (58.6%)	4 (66.7%)	**13 (56.52%)**
Blogs	3 (30.0%)	3 (42.9%)	3 (50.0%)	**9 (39.13%)**
LinkedIn	3 (30.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**7 (30.43%)**
Google+	3 (30.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**6 (26.09%)**
Pinterest	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
Instagram	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
None	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**

C3: Which social media tool do you use the most? (select one)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Facebook	4 (40.0%)	5 (71.4%)	4 (66.7%)	**13 (56.52%)**
Twitter	4 (40.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**5 (21.74%)**
Blogs	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**4 (17.39%)**
LinkedIn	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**

C4: Do you use social media for getting news and information?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	9 (90.0%)	6 (85.7%)	4 (66.7%)	**19 (82.61%)**
No	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**
No answer	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**

C5: Do you use social media for writing or commenting on political, economic, or social issues?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	7 (70.0%)	6 (85.7%)	3 (50.0%)	**16 (69.57%)**
No	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**4 (17.39%)**

C6: ONLY If you answered yes for the previous question: which social media outlet do you use the most for the purposes of writing or commenting on political, economic, or social issues? (select one)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Facebook	4 (40.0%)	5 (71.4%)	3 (50.0%)	**12 (52.17%)**
Twitter	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
Blogs	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	3 (30.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**6 (26.09%)**

C7: Have you ever used a social media tool to communicate with a mainstream media outlet, such as a newspaper, television station, or radio station?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	3 (30.0%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (33.3%)	**8 (34.78%)**
No	5 (50.0%)	4 (58.6%)	1 (16.7%)	**10 (43.48%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	3 (50.0%)	**5 (21.74%)**

C8: Have you used a social media tool to communicate with a politician, political party, or political candidate?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	4 (40.0%)	3 (42.9%)	3 (50.0%)	**10 (43.48%)**
No	3 (30.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**7 (30.43%)**
No answer	3 (30.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**6 (26.09%)**

C9: What media outlets do you use for the purposes of getting news and information? (rank from most to least utilized)

Rank 1:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Internet	6 (60.0%)	6 (85.7%)	4 (80.0%)	**16 (72.73%)**
Newspapers	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (20.0%)	**4 (18.18%)**
Television	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.55%)**
Radio	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.55%)**
No response	-	-	1	**1**

Rank 2:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Newspapers	3 (30.0%)	4 (42.9%)	1 (25.0%)	**8 (38.10%)**
Television	3 (30.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**5 (23.81%)**
Internet	3 (30.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**5 (23.81%)**
Radio	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (25.0%)	**2 (9.52%)**
None	-	-	1 (25.0%)	**1 (4.76%)**

Rank 3:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Newspapers	4 (44.4%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (25.0%)	**6 (31.58%)**
Television	4 (44.4%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**5 (26.32%)**
Radio	-	2 (33.3%)	2 (50.0%)	**4 (21.05%)**
Magazines	-	2 (33.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**3 (15.79%)**
Internet	1 (11.1%)	-	-	**1 (5.26%)**
No response	1	1	2	**4**

Rank 4:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Radio	3 (42.9%)	3 (50.0%)	-	**6 (37.50%)**
Magazines	3 (42.9%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (66.7%)	**6 (37.50%)**
Television	1 (14.3%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (12.50%)**
Newspapers	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (33.3%)	**2 (12.50%)**
No response	3	1	3	**7**

Rank 5:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Magazines	3 (50.0%)	3 (60.0%)	-	**6 (46.15%)**
Radio	3 (50.0%)	-	1 (50.0%)	**4 (30.77%)**
Television	-	2 (40.0%)	1 (50.0%)	**3 (23.08%)**
No response	4	2	4	**10**

C10: Which of the following "non-traditional" media outlets do you use for the purposes of getting news and information? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Alternative print media	4 (40.0%)	3 (42.9%)	5 (83.3%)	**12 (52.17%)**
Internet radio	2 (20.0%)	4 (57.1%)	5 (83.3%)	**11 (47.83%)**
Internet (web) TV	1 (10.0%)	4 (57.1%)	2 (33.3%)	**7 (30.43%)**
Pirate radio	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
None	3 (30.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**5 (21.74%)**

C11: Do you follow the social media accounts of any politician or political candidate?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	5 (50.0%)	3 (42.9%)	-	**8 (34.78%)**
No	1 (10.0%)	3 (42.9%)	5 (83.3%)	**9 (39.13%)**
No answer	4 (40.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**

C12: If you answered yes to the previous question: which politician(s) or candidate(s) do you follow for any reason? (name up to 5)

Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Alexis Tsipras (4) Evaggelos Venizelos (3) Adonis Georgiadis (2) Panos Kammenos (2) Dora Bakogianni Giannis Dragasakis Giorgos Papandreou Antonis Samaras *No answers provided by 6 respondents*	New Democracy* European People's Party* Antonis Samaras Manfred Weber *No answers provided by 6 respondents, one respondent listed two political parties instead of politicians/candidates*	None entered	Alexis Tsipras (4) Evaggelos Venizelos (3) Adonis Georgiadis (2) Panos Kammenos (2) Antonis Samaras (2) Dora Bakogianni Giannis Dragasakis Giorgos Papandreou Manfred Weber New Democracy European People's Party *No answers provided by 18 respondents in total.*

C13: Do you follow the social media accounts of any political parties?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	6 (60.0%)	4 (57.1%)	1 (16.7%)	**11 (47.83%)**
No	2 (20.0%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (33.3%)	**7 (30.43%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	3 (50.0%)	**5 (21.74%)**

C14: Which party/parties do you follow? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	3 (30.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**5 (45.45%)**
New Democracy	4 (40.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**5 (45.45%)**
Elia (PASOK)	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (27.27%)**
To Potami	3 (30.0%)	-	-	**3 (27.27%)**
DIMAR	3 (42.9%)	-	-	**3 (27.27%)**
KKE	2 (20.0%)	-	-	**2 (18.18%)**
Golden Dawn	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (18.18%)**
Independent Greeks	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (9.09%)**
Other (ANTARSYA)	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (9.09%)**

D. TRUSTWORTHINESS AND PREVALENCE OF THE MASS MEDIA

D1: Do you believe that social and new media have contributed to a decline in popularity of the mainstream media (newspapers, television stations, radio stations) in Greece?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	9 (90.0%)	6 (85.7%)	5 (83.3%)	**20 (86.96%)**
No	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
No answer	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**

D2: How would you evaluate the impact of social and new media in the decline in popularity of the mainstream media? (1 = small impact, 5 = large impact)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	2 (22.2%)	-	-	**2 (9.52%)**
3	2 (22.2%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (20.0%)	**5 (23.81%)**
4	5 (55.6%)	4 (57.1%)	-	**9 (42.86%)**
5	-	1 (14.3%)	4 (80.0%)	**5 (23.81%)**
No answer	1	-	1	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	3.33	3.86	4.60	**3.81**
Median	4	4	5	**4**
Mode	4	4	5	**4**

D3: How do you evaluate the trustworthiness of each of the following types of media in Greece? (1 = not credible, 5 = very credible)

Television:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (10.0%)	4 (66.7%)	5 (83.3%)	**10 (45.45%)**
2	6 (60.0%)	-	-	**6 (27.27%)**
3	2 (20.0%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	**4 (18.18%)**
4	1 (10.0%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**2 (9.09%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	-	1	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Mean	2.30	1.83	1.33	**1.91**
Median	2	1	1	**2**
Mode	2	1	1	**1**

Radio:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	1 (16.7%)	2 (33.3%)	**3 (13.64%)**
2	1 (10.0%)	1 (16.7%)	2 (33.3%)	**4 (18.18%)**
3	5 (50.0%)	2 (33.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**9 (40.91%)**
4	4 (40.0%)	2 (33.3%)	-	**6 (27.27%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	-	1	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Mean	3.30	2.83	2.00	**2.82**
Median	3	3	2	**3**
Mode	3	3, 4	1, 2, 3	**3**

Newspapers:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	1 (16.7%)	4 (66.7%)	**5 (22.73%)**
2	1 (10.0%)	2 (33.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**4 (18.18%)**
3	6 (60.0%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	**8 (36.36%)**
4	-	2 (33.3%)	-	**2 (9.09%)**
5	3 (30.0%)	-	-	**3 (13.64%)**
No answer	-	1	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Mean	3.50	2.33	1.50	**2.73**
Median	3	2.5	1	**3**
Mode	3	2, 4	1	**3**

Magazines:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	1 (16.7%)	4 (80.0%)	**5 (25.00%)**
2	1 (10.0%)	2 (33.3%)	1 (20.0%)	**4 (20.00%)**
3	6 (60.0%)	3 (50.0%)	-	**9 (45.00%)**
4	2 (20.0%)	-	-	**2 (10.00%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	1	1	1	**3 (13.04%)**
Mean	3.10	2.33	1.20	**2.40**
Median	3	2.5	1	**3**
Mode	3	3	1	**3**

Internet:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
2	4 (40.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**8 (34.78%)**
3	4 (40.0%)	1 (14.3%)	3 (50.0%)	**8 (34.78%)**
4	1 (10.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**5 (21.74%)**
5	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Mean	2.50	3.14	3.17	**2.87**
Median	2	3	3	**3**
Mode	2, 3	2	3	**2, 3**

D4: Do you believe that mainstream media in Greece are suffering from a credibility crisis?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	9 (90.0%)	5 (71.4%)	6 (100.0%)	**20 (86.96%)**
No	1 (10.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**

D4A: ONLY if you answered yes to the previous question: to what extent is the mainstream media in Greece suffering from a credibility crisis? (1 = very little, 5 = very much)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (5.00%)**
3	1 (11.1%)	1 (20.0%)	1 (16.7%)	**3 (15.00%)**
4	6 (66.7%)	2 (40.0%)	2 (33.3%)	**10 (50.00%)**
5	2 (22.2%)	2 (40.0%)	2 (33.3%)	**6 (30.00%)**
No answer	1	2	-	**3 (13.04%)**
Mean	4.11	4.20	3.83	**4.05**
Median	4	4	4	**4**
Mode	4	4, 5	4, 5	**4**

D5: In your opinion, do you believe that the internet is considered to be a more credible source of news and information for the majority of people in Greece?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	4 (40.0%)	4 (57.1%)	2 (33.3%)	**10 (43.48%)**
No	5 (50.0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (16.7%)	**8 (34.78%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**4 (17.39%)**
No answer	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**

D6: Do you believe that the internet is now used more often than the mainstream media as a source of news and information by the majority of people in Greece?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	6 (60.0%)	5 (71.4%)	2 (33.3%)	**13 (56.52%)**
No	3 (30.0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**3 (13.04%)**
No answer	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**

D7: What percentage of news consumed by the average Greek citizen comes from online sources, in your opinion?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Mean	40.71%	50.83%	44.40%	**45.11%**
No response	3	1	1	**5**
Standard deviation				**23.95**
Minimum	15	30	2	**2**
1st quartile (Q1)				**27.5**
2nd quartile (median)				**42.5**
3rd quartile (Q3)				**62.5**
Maximum	80	70	90	**90**

D8: Do you believe that the mainstream media in Greece is biased in favor of certain political parties?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	9 (90.0%)	4 (57.1%)	4 (66.7%)	**17 (73.91%)**
No	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**

D9: Do you believe that the mainstream media in Greece are biased against certain political parties?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	9 (90.0%)	4 (57.1%)	4 (66.7%)	**17 (73.91%)**
No	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**

D10: Which political parties do you believe that the mainstream media are biased in favor of at this time? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
New Democracy	7 (70.0%)	4 (57.1%)	4 (66.7%)	**15 (65.22%)**
Elia (PASOK)	7 (70.0%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (33.3%)	**12 (52.17%)**
To Potami	6 (60.0%)	3 (42.9%)	3 (50.0%)	**12 (52.17%)**
SYRIZA	5 (50.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**9 (39.13%)**
Independent Greeks	2 (20.0%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
KKE	2 (20.0%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
Golden Dawn	1 (10.0%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**
None	-	1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**

D11: Which political parties do you believe that the mainstream media are biased against at this time? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	5 (50.0%)	1 (16.7%)	3 (50.0%)	**9 (39.13%)**
Golden Dawn	2 (20.0%)	3 (42.9%)	-	**5 (21.74%)**
Independent Greeks	3 (30.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**4 (17.39%)**
KKE	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**
DIMAR	2 (20.0%)	-	-	**2 (8.70%)**
New Democracy	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (EPAM)	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
None	-	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**3 (13.04%)**

D12: Which political party or parties do you believe enjoy the most support amongst the users of social media in Greece? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	6 (60.0%)	4 (57.1%)	4 (66.7%)	**14 (60.87%)**
Golden Dawn	3 (30.0%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (33.3%)	**8 (34.78%)**
To Potami	3 (30.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**7 (30.43%)**
Independent Greeks	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**4 (17.39%)**
New Democracy	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (EPAM)	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (Dem. Socialists Movement)	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
None	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**

D13: Do you believe that the discourse which takes place on social media is biased against any particular political parties?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	8 (80.0%)	4 (57.1%)	3 (50.0%)	**15 (65.22%)**
No	-	3 (42.9%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
I don't know	-	-	2 (33.3%)	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**

D14: Which political party or parties do you believe have seen the biggest decline in support as a result of the coverage it has received on the social/new media? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
New Democracy	6 (60.0%)	4 (57.1%)	3 (50.0%)	**13 (56.52%)**
Elia (PASOK)	4 (40.0%)	4 (57.1%)	3 (50.0%)	**11 (47.83%)**
DIMAR	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (16.7%)	**5 (21.74%)**
Independent Greeks	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
KKE	-	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**3 (13.04%)**
Golden Dawn	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**
To Potami	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
None	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**

D15: Do you believe that Facebook users in Greece are biased towards any one particular political party out of the following? (select one)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	3 (30.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**7 (30.43%)**
Golden Dawn	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
New Democracy	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Independent Greeks	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
To Potami	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
None	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
I don't know	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**4 (17.39%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**5 (21.74%)**

D16: Do you believe that Twitter users in Greece are biased towards any one particular political party out of the following? (select one)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	3 (30.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**7 (30.43%)**
Golden Dawn	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Independent Greeks	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
None	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
I don't know	3 (30.0%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (33.3%)	**8 (34.78%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**4 (17.39%)**

D17: Which age group do you believe is most reliant upon the internet and social media for news and information? (select one)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
18-24	1 (10.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
25-34	7 (70.0%)	4 (57.1%)	1 (16.7%)	**12 (52.17%)**
35-44	1 (10.0%)	-	4 (66.7%)	**5 (21.74%)**
45-54	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
55-64	-	-	-	**-**
65+	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**

D18: Which age group do you believe is most reliant upon mainstream media for news and information? (select one)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
18-24	-	-	-	**-**
25-34	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
35-44	-	-	-	**-**
45-54	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
55-64	6 (60.0%)	4 (57.1%)	1 (16.7%)	**11 (47.83%)**
65+	2 (20.0%)	3 (42.9%)	4 (66.7%)	**9 (39.13%)**
No answer	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**

D19: How would you rate the overall quality of the online and social media presence of the mainstream media outlets in Greece? (1 = very low quality, 5 = very high quality)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**2 (9.52%)**
2	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (50.0%)	**5 (23.81%)**
3	7 (70.0%)	4 (57.1%)	-	**11 (52.38%)**
4	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**2 (9.52%)**
5	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.76%)**
No answer	-	-	2	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	3.33	2.71	2.25	**2.90**
Median	3	3	2	**3**
Mode	3	3	2	**3**

D20: How would you rate the level of integration of new media tools by Greece's mainstream media outlets? (1 = not at all integrated, 5 = very well integrated)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (20.0%)	**2 (9.09%)**
2	3 (30.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (20.0%)	**5 (22.73%)**
3	4 (40.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (20.0%)	**8 (36.36%)**
4	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (40.0%)	**6 (27.27%)**
5	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.55%)**
No answer	-	-	1	**1 (4.35%)**
Mean	2.70	3.43	2.80	**2.95**
Median	3	3	3	**3**
Mode	3	3	4	**3**

D21: Do you believe that Greece's mainstream media has, in general, reacted positively or negatively to the growth in popularity of social media and new media? (1 = very negatively, 5 = very positively)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	2 (50.0%)	**2 (9.52%)**
2	4 (40.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**6 (28.57%)**
3	4 (40.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (25.0%)	**8 (38.10%)**
4	1 (10.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**3 (14.29%)**
5	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (9.52%)**
No answer	-	-	2	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	2.90	3.43	1.75	**2.86**
Median	2.5	3	1.5	**3**
Mode	2, 3	3	1	**3**

D22: Do you believe that the social and new media presence of Greece's mainstream media outlets has made those outlets more credible than they were previously?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	3 (33.3%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**5 (21.74%)**
No	6 (66.7%)	3 (42.9%)	3 (50.0%)	**12 (52.17%)**
I don't know	-	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**4 (17.39%)**
No answer	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**

D23: How would you rank the overall fluency of journalists at Greece's mainstream media outlets, with new and social media tools? (1 = very poor, 5 = excellent)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	2 (50.0%)	**2 (10.53%)**
2	3 (33.3%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**4 (21.05%)**
3	5 (55.6%)	2 (33.3%)	2 (50.0%)	**9 (47.37%)**
4	1 (11.1%)	3 (50.0%)	-	**4 (21.05%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	1	1	2	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	2.78	3.33	2.00	**2.79**
Median	3	3.5	2	**3**
Mode	3	4	1, 3	**3**

D24A: Overall, how would you characterize the impact of social media on the quality of journalism in Greece, from all sources? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	2 (22.2%)	-	1 (33.3%)	**3 (15.79%)**
3	2 (22.2%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (33.3%)	**6 (31.58%)**
4	2 (22.2%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (33.3%)	**6 (31.58%)**
5	3 (33.3%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**4 (21.05%)**
No answer	1	-	3	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	3.67	3.71	3.00	**3.58**
Median	3.5	4	3	**3.5**
Mode	5	3, 4	2, 3, 4	**3, 4**

D24B: Overall, how would you characterize the impact of social media on the quality of journalism in Greece, from all sources? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	1 (16.7%)	-	**1 (6.67%)**
2	3 (50.0%)	-	-	**3 (20.00%)**
3	1 (16.7%)	4 (66.7%)	3 (100.0%)	**8 (53.33%)**
4	2 (33.3%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**3 (20.00%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	4	1	3	**8**
Mean	2.83	2.83	3.00	**2.87**
Median	2.5	3	3	**3**
Mode	2	3	3	**3**

D25: Do you believe that the mainstream media in Greece, through the manner in which they cover and report the news, have led people to search for alternative sources of news and information on the internet? (1 = completely disagree, 5 = completely agree)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (11.1%)	-	-	**1 (4.76%)**
2	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.76%)**
3	2 (22.2%)	-	-	**2 (9.52%)**
4	1 (11.1%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (40.0%)	**6 (28.57%)**
5	5 (55.6%)	3 (42.9%)	3 (60.0%)	**11 (52.38%)**
No answer	1	-	1	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	4.00	4.14	4.60	**4.19**
Median	5	4	5	**5**
Mode	5	4, 5	5	**5**

D26: Name three online-only Greek media outlets that first come to mind (only list outlets which operate exclusively online)

Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
news247.gr (2) newsbomb.gr (2) thetoc.gr (2) zoornalistas. blogspot.com (2) 902.gr antinews.gr arouraios.blogspot.com capital.gr hotdoc.gr* iefimerida.gr in.gr left.gr newsit.gr onlytheater.gr press-gr.com protothema.gr* thepressproject.gr zougla.gr *No answers provided by 1 respondent*	in.gr (2) enikos.gr huffingtonpost.gr iefimerida.gr protothema.gr* real.gr* skai.gr* stoxos.gr* *No answers provided by 4 respondents*	apenantioxthi.com iefimerida.gr info-war.gr kostasxan.blogspot.com koutipandoras.gr thepressproject.gr *No answers provided by 4 respondents*	iefimerida.gr (3) in.gr (3) news247.gr (2) protothema.gr (2)* thepressproject.gr (2) thetoc.gr (2) zoornalistas. blogspot.com (2) 902.gr antinews.gr apenantioxthi.com arouraios.blogspot.com capital.gr enikos.gr hotdoc.gr* huffingtonpost.gr info-war.gr kostasxan.blogspot. com koutipandoras.gr left.gr newsit.gr onlytheater.gr press-gr.com real.gr* skai.gr* stoxos.gr* zougla.gr *No answers provided by 9 respondents*

** - Outlet also operates offline but was listed by respondent as an online-only outlet.*

E. IMPACT OF SOCIAL AND NEW MEDIA ON POLITICS

E1: According to your own perception, to what extent have social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter been implemented and used by Greek politicians and political parties in their daily operations? (1 = not at all, 5 = very much)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	-	-	-	**-**
3	3 (37.5%)	2 (28.6%)	3 (60.0%)	**8 (40.00%)**
4	4 (50.0%)	5 (71.4%)	2 (40.0%)	**11 (55.00%)**
5	1 (12.5%)	-	-	**1 (5.00%)**
No answer	2	-	1	**3 (13.04%)**
Mean	3.75	3.71	3.40	**3.65**
Median	4	4	3	**4**
Mode	4	4	3	**4**

E2: Order the following social media platforms according to how commonly you believe they are used by politicians in Greece (rank only from 1-3, with 1 being the most popular, 2 being second most popular, and 3 being third-most popular)

Rank 1:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Facebook	4 (44.4%)	4 (57.1%)	2 (50.0%)	**10 (50.00%)**
Twitter	5 (55.6%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (50.0%)	**9 (45.00%)**
Blogs	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (5.00%)**
No answer	1	-	2	**3**

Rank 2:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Facebook	5 (55.6%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (50.0%)	**9 (45.00%)**
Twitter	1 (11.1%)	3 (43.9%)	1 (25.0%)	**5 (25.00%)**
YouTube	2 (22.2%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (15.00%)**
Blogs	1 (11.1%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**3 (15.00%)**
No answer	1	-	2	**3**

Rank 3:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
YouTube	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (25.0%)	**5 (29.41%)**
Twitter	2 (28.6%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (25.0%)	**4 (23.53%)**
Blogs	-	2 (33.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**3 (17.65%)**
Google+	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**2 (11.76%)**
LinkedIn	-	-	1 (25.0%)	**1 (5.88%)**
Facebook	-	1 (16.7%)	-	**1 (5.88%)**
Instagram	1 (14.3%)	-	-	**1 (5.88%)**
No answer	3	1	2	**6**

E3: Overall, do you believe that the Greek government has a positive or a negative view of the internet, new media, and social media? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (11.1%)	-	2 (40.0%)	**3 (15.00%)**
2	1 (11.1%)	-	-	**1 (5.00%)**
3	5 (55.6%)	1 (16.7%)	2 (40.0%)	**8 (40.00%)**
4	1 (11.1%)	4 (66.7%)	1 (20.0%)	**6 (30.00%)**
5	1 (11.1%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**2 (10.00%)**
No answer	1	1	1	**3 (13.04%)**
Mean	3.00	4.00	1.75	**3.15**
Median	3	4	3	**3**
Mode	3	4	1, 3	**3**

E4: Overall, do you believe that the Greek government has a positive or a negative view of bloggers? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (12.5%)	-	3 (60.0%)	**4 (21.05%)**
2	6 (75.0%)	-	2 (40.0%)	**8 (42.11%)**
3	1 (12.5%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**2 (10.53%)**
4	-	4 (66.7%)	-	**4 (21.05%)**
5	-	1 (16.7%)	-	**1 (5.26%)**
No answer	2	1	1	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	2.00	4.00	1.75	**2.47**
Median	2	4	1	**2**
Mode	2	4	1	**2**

E5A: Overall, how would you rank the influence of new media and social media on the quality of governance in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	1 (25.0%)	**1 (5.00%)**
2	4 (44.4%)	-	-	**4 (20.00%)**
3	3 (33.3%)	5 (71.4%)	2 (50.0%)	**10 (50.00%)**
4	2 (22.2%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (25.0%)	**5 (25.00%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	1	-	2	**3 (13.04%)**
Mean	2.78	3.29	2.75	**2.95**
Median	3	3	3	**3**
Mode	2	3	3	**3**

E5B: Overall, how would you rank the influence of new media and social media on the quality of governance in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (16.7%)	-	1 (25.0%)	**2 (13.33%)**
2	2 (33.3%)	1 (20.0%)	-	**3 (20.00%)**
3	3 (50.0%)	2 (40.0%)	2 (50.0%)	**7 (46.67%)**
4	-	1 (20.0%)	1 (25.0%)	**2 (13.33%)**
5	-	1 (20.0%)	-	**1 (6.67%)**
No answer	4	2	2	**8 (34.78%)**
Mean	2.33	3.40	2.75	**2.80**
Median	2.5	3	3	**3**
Mode	3	3	3	**3**

E6A: Overall, how would you rank the impact of new and social media on government transparency in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	1 (25.0%)	**1 (5.26%)**
2	-	2 (28.6%)	1 (25.0%)	**3 (15.79%)**
3	3 (37.5%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (25.0%)	**6 (31.58%)**
4	5 (62.5%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**7 (36.84%)**
5	-	2 (28.6%)	-	**2 (10.53%)**
No answer	2	-	2	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	3.63	3.43	2.50	**3.32**
Median	4	3	2.5	**3**
Mode	4	2, 3, 5	1, 2, 3, 4	**4**

E6B: Overall, how would you rank the impact of new and social media on government transparency in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	1 (25.0%)	**1 (6.67%)**
2	-	-	1 (25.0%)	**1 (6.67%)**
3	4 (66.7%)	3 (60.0%)	1 (25.0%)	**8 (53.33%)**
4	2 (33.3%)	1 (20.0%)	1 (25.0%)	**4 (26.67%)**
5	-	1 (20.0%)	-	**1 (6.67%)**
No answer	4	2	2	**8 (34.78%)**
Mean	3.33	3.60	2.50	**3.20**
Median	3	3	2.5	**3**
Mode	3	3	1, 2, 3, 4	**3**

E7: Overall, how would you rank the impact of new and social media on the transparency of Greece's political parties? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (12.5%)	-	1 (25.0%)	**2 (10.53%)**
2	-	-	1 (25.0%)	**1 (5.26%)**
3	5 (62.5%)	4 (57.1%)	2 (50.0%)	**11 (57.89%)**
4	2 (25.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**4 (21.05%)**
5	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (5.26%)**
No answer	2	-	2	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	3.00	3.57	2.25	**3.05**
Median	3	3	2.5	**3**
Mode	3	3	3	**3**

E8: How would you evaluate the overall impact of new and social media in influencing the electoral results of the parliamentary elections of 2012? (1 = no influence, 5 = extremely significant influence)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	4 (44.4%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**5 (23.81%)**
3	3 (33.3%)	2 (28.6%)	5 (100.0%)	**10 (47.62%)**
4	2 (22.2%)	3 (42.9%)	-	**5 (23.81%)**
5	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.76%)**
No answer	1	-	1	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	2.78	3.57	3.00	**3.10**
Median	3	4	3	**3**
Mode	2	4	3	**3**

E9: Which political party or parties do you believe have benefited the most from new media and social media? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	7 (70.0%)	5 (71.4%)	3 (50.0%)	**15 (65.22%)**
To Potami	6 (60.0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (16.7%)	**9 (39.13%)**
Golden Dawn	4 (40.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**8 (34.78%)**
Independent Greeks	4 (40.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**
New Democracy	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
DIMAR	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (EPAM)	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (Dem. Socialists Movement)	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
I don’t know	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**4 (17.39%)**

E10: Which political party or parties do you believe benefited the most from new media and social media prior to the parliamentary elections of May 2012? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	5 (50.0%)	5 (71.4%)	1 (16.7%)	**11 (47.83%)**
Golden Dawn	4 (40.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**8 (34.78%)**
New Democracy	3 (30.0%)	4 (57.1%)	-	**7 (30.43%)**
Independent Greeks	3 (30.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**5 (21.74%)**
Elia (PASOK)	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
DIMAR	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
Other (EPAM)	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
None	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**4 (17.39%)**

E11: Which political party or parties do you believe benefited the most from new media and social media prior to the parliamentary elections of June 2012? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	6 (60.0%)	4 (57.1%)	1 (16.7%)	**11 (47.83%)**
Golden Dawn	4 (40.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**8 (34.78%)**
New Democracy	3 (30.0%)	3 (42.9%)	-	**6 (26.09%)**
Independent Greeks	2 (20.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**4 (17.39%)**
DIMAR	2 (20.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**
Elia (PASOK)	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (EPAM)*	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	3 (50.0%)	**5 (21.74%)**

* - *EPAM did not participate in the June 2012 parliamentary elections, but was listed by one respondent.*

E12: Which political party or parties do you believe have benefited the least from new media and social media? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
KKE	7 (70.0%)	4 (57.1%)	1 (16.7%)	**12 (52.17%)**
New Democracy	3 (30.0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**
Elia (PASOK)	2 (20.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**
DIMAR	3 (30.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**4 (17.39%)**
Golden Dawn	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
Independent Greeks	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
SYRIZA	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
To Potami	-	1 (14.3%)		**1 (4.35%)**
Other (EPAM)	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**5 (21.74%)**

E13: Which political party or parties do you believe have benefited the least from new media and social media prior to the parliamentary elections of May 2012? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
KKE	7 (70.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**11 (47.83%)**
Elia (PASOK)	3 (30.0%)	3 (42.9%)	-	**6 (26.09%)**
New Democracy	3 (30.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**5 (21.74%)**
DIMAR	3 (30.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**4 (17.39%)**
Golden Dawn	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
SYRIZA	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
Independent Greeks	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
Other (EPAM)	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (LAOS)	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (33.3%)	**6 (26.09%)**

E14: Which political party or parties do you believe benefited the least from new media and social media prior to the parliamentary elections of June 2012? (select all that are applicable)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
KKE	7 (70.0%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (33.3%)	**12 (52.17%)**
Elia (PASOK)	3 (30.0%)	3 (42.9%)	-	**6 (26.09%)**
New Democracy	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**4 (17.39%)**
DIMAR	3 (30.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**4 (17.39%)**
Golden Dawn	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
Independent Greeks	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
Other (LAOS)	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	3 (42.9%)	3 (50.0%)	**7 (30.43%)**

E15: Which political party do you believe makes the most effective use of social and new media in its operations?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	4 (40.0%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (33.3%)	**9 (39.13%)**
To Potami	-	-	2 (33.3%)	**2 (8.70%)**
Golden Dawn	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
New Democracy	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Independent Greeks	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (Dem. Socialists Movement)	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**4 (17.39%)**

E16: Which political party do you believe makes the least effective use of social and new media in its operations?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
New Democracy	3 (30.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**7 (30.43%)**
KKE	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**5 (21.74%)**
DIMAR	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
To Potami	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Golden Dawn	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**4 (17.39%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**

E17: Do you believe that the outcome of the 2012 parliamentary elections would have been different had social & new media not existed?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
Probably Yes	2 (20.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**
Probably No	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**6 (26.09%)**
No	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
No answer	3 (30.0%)	-	3 (50.0%)	**6 (26.09%)**

E18: In your opinion, how effective was the usage of social media in the campaigns of candidates in the 2012 parliamentary elections? (1 = very ineffective, 5 = very effective)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	4 (50.0%)	2 (33.3%)	-	**6 (35.29%)**
3	3 (37.5%)	1 (16.7%)	2 (66.7%)	**6 (35.29%)**
4	1 (12.5%)	2 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	**4 (23.53%)**
5	-	1 (16.7%)	-	**1 (5.88%)**
No answer	2	1	3	**6 (26.09%)**
Mean	2.63	3.33	3.33	**3.00**
Median	2.5	3.5	3	**3**
Mode	2	2, 4	3	**2, 3**

E19: In your opinion, how effective was the usage of social media tools by candidates and political parties participating in this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece? (1 = very ineffective, 5 = very effective)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	1 (12.5%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (11.11%)**
3	5 (62.5%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (33.3%)	**8 (44.44%)**
4	2 (25.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (66.7%)	**6 (33.33%)**
5	-	2 (28.6%)	-	**2 (11.11%)**
No answer	2	-	3	**5 (21.74%)**
Mean	3.13	3.71	3.67	**3.44**
Median	3	4	4	**3**
Mode	3	3, 4, 5	4	**3**

E20: In your opinion, how effective was the usage of social media tools by candidates and political parties participating in this year's local and municipal elections in Greece? (1 = very ineffective, 5 = very effective)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	3 (37.5%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**4 (22.22%)**
3	5 (62.5%)	2 (33.3%)	2 (50.0%)	**9 (50.00%)**
4	-	3 (50.0%)	1 (25.0%)	**4 (22.22%)**
5	-	-	1 (25.0%)	**1 (5.56%)**
No answer	2	1	2	**5 (21.74%)**
Mean	2.63	3.33	3.75	**3.11**
Median	3	3.5	3.5	**3**
Mode	3	4	3	**3**

E21: In your opinion, have the internet. new media, and social media given the public the opportunity to find out more information about candidates in this year's elections in Greece, compared to the past? (1 = not at all, 5 = very much so)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	1 (12.5%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (10.53%)**
3	2 (25.0%)	-	1 (25.0%)	**3 (15.79%)**
4	5 (62.5%)	4 (57.1%)	1 (25.0%)	**10 (52.63%)**
5	-	2 (28.6%)	2 (50.0%)	**4 (21.05%)**
No answer	2	-	2	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	3.50	4.00	4.25	**3.84**
Median	4	4	4.5	**4**
Mode	4	4	5	**4**

E22A: How would you gauge the impact of new media and social media on the quality and level of campaigning for this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	2 (25.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (15.79%)**
3	3 (37.5%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (50.0%)	**8 (42.11%)**
4	3 (37.5%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (50.0%)	**7 (36.84%)**
5	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (5.26%)**
No answer	2	-	2	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	3.13	3.43	3.50	**3.32**
Median	3	3	3.5	**3**
Mode	3, 4	3	3, 4	**3**

E22B: How would you gauge the impact of new media and social media on the quality and level of campaigning for this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**2 (12.50%)**
3	4 (66.7%)	3 (50.0%)	2 (50.0%)	**9 (56.25%)**
4	1 (16.7%)	2 (33.3%)	2 (50.0%)	**5 (31.25%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	4	1	2	**7 (30.43%)**
Mean	3.00	3.17	3.50	**3.19**
Median	3	3	3.5	**3**
Mode	3	3	3, 4	**3**

E23A: How would you gauge the impact of new media and social media on the quality and level of campaigning for this year's local and municipal elections in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	3 (37.5%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**5 (26.32%)**
3	3 (37.5%)	4 (57.1%)	1 (25.0%)	**8 (42.11%)**
4	2 (25.0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (25.0%)	**5 (26.32%)**
5	-	-	1 (25.0%)	**1 (5.26%)**
No answer	2	-	2	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	3.38	3.14	3.50	**3.11**
Median	3	3	3.5	**3**
Mode	2, 3	3	2, 3, 4, 5	**3**

E23B: How would you gauge the impact of new media and social media on the quality and level of campaigning for this year's local and municipal elections in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	3 (50.0%)	2 (33.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**6 (37.50%)**
3	3 (50.0%)	3 (50.0%)	1 (25.0%)	**7 (43.75%)**
4	-	1 (16.7%)	1 (25.0%)	**2 (12.50%)**
5	-	-	1 (25.0%)	**1 (6.25%)**
No answer	4	1	2	**7 (30.43%)**
Mean	2.50	2.83	3.50	**2.88**
Median	2.50	3	3.5	**3**
Mode	2, 3	3	2, 3, 4, 5	**3**

E24A: How would you gauge the impact of new media and social media on the transparency maintained by the political parties and candidates participating in this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	2 (25.0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (33.3%)	**5 (27.78%)**
3	3 (37.5%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (33.3%)	**5 (27.78%)**
4	3 (37.5%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (33.3%)	**7 (38.89%)**
5	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (5.56%)**
No answer	2	-	3	**5 (21.74%)**
Mean	3.13	3.43	3.00	**3.22**
Median	3	4	3	**3**
Mode	3, 4	4	3	**4**

E24B: How would you gauge the impact of new media and social media on the transparency maintained by the political parties and candidates participating in this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (33.3%)	**3 (20.00%)**
3	3 (50.0%)	2 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)	**7 (46.67%)**
4	2 (33.3%)	2 (33.3%)	-	**4 (26.67%)**
5	-	1 (16.7%)	-	**1 (6.67%)**
No answer	4	1	3	**8 (34.78%)**
Mean	3.17	3.50	2.67	**3.20**
Median	3	3.5	3	**3**
Mode	3	3, 4	3	**3**

E25A: How would you gauge the impact of new and social media on the transparency of the political parties and candidates participating in this year's local/municipal elections in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	2 (25.0%)	2 (33.3%)	1 (33.3%)	**5 (29.41%)**
3	3 (37.5%)	-	1 (33.3%)	**4 (23.53%)**
4	3 (37.5%)	3 (50.0%)	-	**6 (35.29%)**
5	-	1 (16.7%)	1 (33.3%)	**2 (11.76%)**
No answer	2	1	3	**6 (26.09%)**
Mean	3.13	3.50	3.33	**3.29**
Median	3	4	3	**3**
Mode	3, 4	4	2, 3, 5	**4**

E25B: How would you gauge the impact of new and social media on the transparency of the political parties and candidates participating in this year's local/municipal elections in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	2 (33.3%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (33.3%)	**5 (31.25%)**
3	3 (50.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (66.7%)	**7 (43.75%)**
4	1 (16.7%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**3 (18.75%)**
5	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (6.25%)**
No answer	4	-	3	**7 (30.43%)**
Mean	2.83	3.29	2.67	**3.00**
Median	3	3	3	**3**
Mode	3	2, 3, 4	3	**3**

E26: Which political party or parties do you believe benefited the most from new and social media in this year's European parliamentary elections?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	7 (70.0%)	4 (57.1%)	3 (50.0%)	**14 (60.87%)**
To Potami	5 (50.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**9 (39.13%)**
Golden Dawn	3 (30.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**5 (21.74%)**
New Democracy	3 (30.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**4 (17.39%)**
Elia (PASOK)	2 (20.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**
Independent Greeks	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Other (EPAM)	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**

E27: Which political party or parties do you believe benefited the most from new and social media in this year's local and municipal elections in Greece?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	7 (70.0%)	4 (57.1%)	2 (33.3%)	**13 (56.52%)**
New Democracy	3 (30.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**5 (21.74%)**
Golden Dawn	1 (10.0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (16.7%)	**4 (17.39%)**
Elia (PASOK)	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
To Potami	2 (20.0%)	-	-	**2 (8.70%)**
Independent Greeks	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
None	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**

E28: Which political party do you believe was helped the most by social and new media in this year's European parliamentary elections? (select one)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
SYRIZA	5 (50.0%)	4 (57.1%)	-	**9 (39.13%)**
Golden Dawn	1 (10.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
To Potami	-	-	2 (33.3%)	**2 (8.70%)**
Independent Greeks	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	3 (50.0%)	**5 (21.74%)**

E29: Which political party do you believe was hurt the most by social and new media in this year's European parliamentary elections? (select one)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
New Democracy	3 (30.0%)	3 (42.9%)	-	**6 (26.09%)**
KKE	2 (20.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**4 (17.39%)**
Elia (PASOK)	-	3 (42.9%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
Golden Dawn	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
DIMAR	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
None	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	3 (50.0%)	**5 (21.74%)**

E30: Which political party do you believe was hurt the most by social and new media in this year's local and municipal elections in Greece? (select one)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
New Democracy	4 (40.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**6 (26.09%)**
KKE	2 (20.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**4 (17.39%)**
Elia (PASOK)	-	3 (42.9%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
Golden Dawn	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
None	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	3 (50.0%)	**5 (21.74%)**

E31: Do you believe that social media and new media impacted the final outcome of this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	2 (20.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**
Probably Yes	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**4 (17.39%)**
Probably No	3 (30.0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**
No	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	3 (50.0%)	**5 (21.74%)**

E32: Do you believe that social media and new media impacted the final outcome of this year's local and municipal elections in Greece?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	3 (30.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**5 (21.74%)**
Probably Yes	-	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**4 (17.39%)**
Probably No	4 (40.0%)	3 (42.9%)	-	**7 (30.43%)**
No	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	3 (50.0%)	**5 (21.74%)**

E33: Do you believe that the usage of new and social media tools by this year's candidates for all electoral contests increased compared to the level of usage prior to the 2012 parliamentary elections?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	7 (70.0%)	6 (85.7%)	4 (66.7%)	**17 (73.91%)**
No	-	-	-	**-**
I don’t know	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**5 (21.74%)**

F. IMPACT OF SOCIAL AND NEW MEDIA ON THE PUBLIC SPHERE

F1A: How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media to the public sphere in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	3 (33.3%)	-	-	**3 (14.29%)**
3	2 (22.2%)	4 (57.1%)	4 (80.0%)	**10 (47.62%)**
4	4 (44.4%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (20.0%)	**8 (38.10%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	1	-	1	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	3.11	3.43	3.20	**3.24**
Median	3	3	3	**3**
Mode	4	3	3	**3**

F1B: How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media to the public sphere in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	4 (66.7%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**5 (29.41%)**
3	2 (33.3%)	4 (57.1%)	5 (100.0%)	**11 (64.71%)**
4	-	1 (16.7%)	-	**1 (5.88%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	4	1	1	**6 (26.09%)**
Mean	2.33	3.00	3.00	**2.76**
Median	2	3	3	**3**
Mode	2	3	3	**3**

F2: Do you believe that new media and social media have made a positive or a negative contribution to the public sphere in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (11.1%)	-	-	**1 (4.76%)**
2	3 (33.3%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (40.0%)	**7 (33.33%)**
3	3 (33.3%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (20.0%)	**7 (33.33%)**
4	1 (11.1%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (40.0%)	**5 (23.81%)**
5	1 (11.1%)	-	-	**1 (4.76%)**
No answer	1	-	1	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	2.78	3.00	3.00	**2.90**
Median	3	3	3	**3**
Mode	2, 3	3	2, 4	**2, 3**

F3: How would you gauge the contribution of mainstream media to the public sphere in Greece historically (in the post-junta period)? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	2 (50.0%)	**2 (10.53%)**
2	-	2 (33.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**3 (15.79%)**
3	3 (33.3%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**4 (21.05%)**
4	1 (11.1%)	2 (33.3%)	-	**3 (15.79%)**
5	5 (55.6%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (25.0%)	**7 (36.84%)**
No answer	1	1	2	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	4.22	3.33	2.25	**3.53**
Median	5	3.5	1.5	**3**
Mode	5	2, 4	1	**3**

F4A: How would you gauge the contribution of mainstream media to the public sphere in Greece today? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (11.1%)	-	1 (25.0%)	**2 (10.00%)**
2	1 (11.1%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (10.00%)**
3	4 (44.4%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (50.0%)	**9 (45.00%)**
4	2 (22.2%)	3 (42.9%)	-	**5 (25.00%)**
5	1 (11.1%)	-	1 (25.0%)	**2 (10.00%)**
No answer	1	-	2	**3 (13.04%)**
Mean	3.11	3.29	4.00	**3.15**
Median	3	3	3	**3**
Mode	3	3, 4	3	**3**

F4B: How would you gauge the contribution of mainstream media to the public sphere in Greece today? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (25.0%)	1 (16.7%)	2 (50.0%)	**4 (28.57%)**
2	2 (50.0%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**3 (21.43%)**
3	1 (25.0%)	3 (50.0%)	2 (50.0%)	**6 (42.86%)**
4	-	1 (16.7%)	-	**1 (7.14%)**
5	-	-	-	-
No answer	6	1	2	**9 (39.13%)**
Mean	2.00	2.67	2.00	**2.29**
Median	2	3	2	**2.5**
Mode	2	3	1, 3	**3**

F5A: How would you gauge the level of development of public dialogue and discourse in Greece in the post-junta era? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	2 (22.2%)	1 (16.7%)	3 (75.0%)	**6 (31.58%)**
2	-	2 (33.3%)	-	**2 (10.53%)**
3	4 (44.4%)	2 (33.3%)	-	**6 (31.58%)**
4	3 (33.3%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (25.0%)	**5 (26.32%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	1	1	2	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	2.89	2.50	1.75	**2.53**
Median	3	2.5	1	**3**
Mode	3	2, 3	1	**1, 3**

F5B: How would you gauge the level of development of public dialogue and discourse in Greece in the post-junta era? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (14.3%)	1 (20.0%)	2 (50.0%)	**4 (25.00%)**
2	2 (28.6%)	1 (20.0%)	-	**3 (18.75%)**
3	2 (28.6%)	3 (60.0%)	1 (25.0%)	**6 (37.50%)**
4	2 (28.6%)	-	1 (25.0%)	**3 (18.75%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	3	2	2	**7 (30.43%)**
Mean	2.71	2.40	2.25	**2.50**
Median	3	3	2	**3**
Mode	2, 3, 4	3	1	**3**

F6: How would you gauge the quality and level of public dialogue/discourse in Greece today? (1 = very poorly developed, 5 = very well developed)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	2 (22.2%)	4 (57.1%)	3 (60.0%)	**9 (42.86%)**
2	7 (77.8%)	-	-	**7 (33.33%)**
3	-	2 (28.6%)	1 (20.0%)	**3 (14.29%)**
4	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (20.0%)	**2 (9.52%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	1	-	1	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	1.78	2.00	2.00	**1.90**
Median	2	1	1	**2**
Mode	2	1	1	**1**

F7: Rank the following social media outlets according to their popularity in Greece, based on your own perception (rank the top 5 only).

Rank 1:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Facebook	4 (40.0%)	6 (85.7%)	3 (75.0%)	**13 (68.42%)**
Twitter	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (25.0%)	**2 (10.53%)**
YouTube	2 (20.0%)	-	-	**2 (10.53%)**
Blogs	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (10.53%)**
No answer	2	-	2	**4**

Rank 2:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Twitter	2 (20.0%)	4 (57.1%)	2 (50.0%)	**8 (42.11%)**
Facebook	4 (40.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**6 (31.58%)**
Blogs	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (15.79%)**
YouTube	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**2 (10.53%)**
No answer	2	-	2	**4**

Rank 3:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
YouTube	3 (30.0%)	2 (33.3%)	3 (75.0%)	**8 (44.44%)**
Twitter	4 (40.0%)	2 (33.3%)	-	**6 (33.33%)**
Blogs	-	2 (33.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**3 (16.67%)**
LinkedIn	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (5.56%)**
No answer	2	1	2	**5**

Rank 4:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Blogs	1 (10.0%)	1 (16.7%)	2 (50.0%)	**4 (26.67%)**
Twitter	1 (10.0%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (25.0%)	**3 (20.00%)**
YouTube	1 (10.0%)	2 (33.3%)	-	**3 (20.00%)**
Google+	1 (10.0%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**2 (13.33%)**
Instagram	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (25.0%)	**2 (13.33%)**
LinkedIn	-	1 (16.7%)	-	**1 (6.67%)**
No answer	5	1	2	**8**

Rank 5:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Google+	1 (10.0%)	1 (25.0%)	1 (33.3%)	**3 (25.00%)**
Instagram	3 (30.0%)	-	-	**3 (25.00%)**
LinkedIn	1 (10.0%)	1 (25.0%)	-	**2 (16.67%)**
Blogs	-	1 (25.0%)	1 (33.3%)	**2 (16.67%)**
YouTube	-	1 (25.0%)	-	**1 (8.33%)**
Pinterest	-	-	1 (33.3%)	**1 (8.33%)**

F8: Which social media outlet do you believe is the most popular in Greece for the purposes of discussing political issues at the present time? (select one)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Facebook	3 (30.0%)	4 (57.1%)	2 (33.3%)	**9 (39.13%)**
Twitter	4 (40.0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (16.7%)	**7 (30.43%)**
Blogs	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**
I don't know	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**3 (13.04%)**

F9: How would you gauge the impact of social media and new media in exposing the following issues to the public? (For each: 1 = no impact, 5 = very significant impact)

Murder of Pavlos Fyssas	**4.53**
Shutdown of ERT	**4.50**
Indignants' protest movement	**4.39**
Kiling of Alexandros Grigoropoulos	**4.28**
Skouries mining controversy	**4.17**
Golden Dawn arrests	**3.94**
Arrest of journalist Kostas Vaxevanis	**3.88**
Manolada controversy	**3.74**
Arrest of blogger Geron Pastitsios	**3.61**

Killing of Alexandros Grigoropoulos:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	1 (12.5%)	-	-	**1 (5.56%)**
3	2 (25.0%)	-	-	**2 (11.11%)**
4	3 (37.5%)	2 (33.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**6 (33.33%)**
5	2 (25.0%)	4 (66.7%)	3 (75.0%)	**9 (50.00%)**
No answer	2	1	2	**5 (21.74%)**
Mean	3.75	4.67	4.75	**4.28**
Median	4	5	5	**4.5**
Mode	4	5	5	**5**

Indignants' protest movement:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	-	-	-	**-**
3	2 (25.0%)	1 (20.0%)	1 (20.0%)	**4 (22.22%)**
4	1 (12.5%)	2 (40.0%)	-	**3 (16.67%)**
5	5 (62.5%)	2 (40.0%)	4 (80.0%)	**11 (61.11%)**
No answer	2	2	1	**5 (21.74%)**
Mean	4.38	4.20	4.60	**4.39**
Median	5	4	5	**5**
Mode	5	4, 5	5	**5**

Arrest of blogger Geron Pastitsios:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	1 (16.7%)	-	**1 (5.56%)**
2	1 (12.5%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**2 (11.11%)**
3	1 (12.5%)	1 (16.7%)	3 (75.0%)	**5 (27.78%)**
4	4 (50.0%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**5 (27.78%)**
5	2 (25.0%)	2 (33.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**5 (27.78%)**
No answer	2	1	2	**5 (21.74%)**
Mean	3.88	3.33	3.50	**3.61**
Median	4	3.5	3	**4**
Mode	4	5	3	**3, 4, 5**

Arrest of journalist Kostas Vaxevanis:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	1 (20.0%)	-	**1 (5.88%)**
2	1 (12.5%)	-	-	**1 (5.88%)**
3	2 (25.0%)	1 (20.0%)	-	**3 (17.65%)**
4	3 (37.5%)	2 (40.0%)	1 (25.0%)	**6 (35.29%)**
5	2 (25.0%)	1 (20.0%)	3 (75.0%)	**6 (35.29%)**
No answer	2	2	2	**6 (26.09%)**
Mean	3.75	3.40	4.75	**3.88**
Median	4	4	5	**4**
Mode	4	4	5	**4, 5**

Skouries mining controversy:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	1 (16.7%)	-	**1 (5.56%)**
2	-	-	-	**-**
3	1 (12.5%)	2 (33.3%)	-	**3 (16.67%)**
4	3 (37.5%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (25.0%)	**5 (27.78%)**
5	4 (50.0%)	2 (33.3%)	3 (75.0%)	**9 (50.00%)**
No answer	2	1	2	**5 (21.74%)**
Mean	4.38	3.50	4.75	**4.17**
Median	4.5	3.5	5	**4.5**
Mode	5	3, 5	5	**5**

Manolada controversy:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	1 (16.7%)	-	**1 (5.26%)**
2	1 (11.1%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**2 (10.53%)**
3	3 (33.3%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (25.0%)	**5 (26.32%)**
4	2 (22.2%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (25.0%)	**4 (21.05%)**
5	3 (33.3%)	2 (33.3%)	2 (50.0%)	**7 (36.84%)**
No answer	1	1	2	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	3.78	3.33	4.25	**3.74**
Median	4	3.5	4.5	**4**
Mode	3, 5	5	5	**5**

Shutdown of ERT:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	-	1 (16.7%)	-	**1 (5.56%)**
3	1 (12.5%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**2 (11.11%)**
4	2 (25.0%)	-	-	**2 (11.11%)**
5	5 (62.5%)	4 (66.7%)	4 (100.0%)	**13 (72.22%)**
No answer	2	1	2	**5 (21.74%)**
Mean	4.50	4.17	5.00	**4.50**
Median	5	5	5	**5**
Mode	5	5	5	**5**

Murder of Pavlos Fyssas:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	-	-	-	**-**
3	2 (22.2%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**3 (15.79%)**
4	2 (22.2%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**3 (15.79%)**
5	5 (55.6%)	4 (66.7%)	4 (100.0%)	**13 (68.42%)**
No answer	1	1	2	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	4.33	4.50	5.00	**4.53**
Median	5	5	5	**5**
Mode	5	5	5	**5**

Golden Dawn arrests:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	1 (12.5%)	-	1 (25.0%)	**2 (11.11%)**
3	1 (12.5%)	2 (33.3%)	-	**3 (16.67%)**
4	4 (50.0%)	1 (16.7%)	2 (50.0%)	**7 (38.89%)**
5	2 (25.0%)	3 (50.0%)	1 (25.0%)	**6 (33.33%)**
No answer	2	1	2	**5 (21.74%)**
Mean	3.88	4.17	3.75	**3.94**
Median	4	4.5	4	**4**
Mode	4	5	4	**4**

F10: In your opinion, was the coverage provided by social and new media for each of the following issues more thorough and credible compared to the coverage provided by the mainstream media?

Killing of Alexandros Grigoropoulos:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	5 (50.0%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (33.3%)	**10 (43.48%)**
No	2 (20.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**
I don’t know	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**5 (21.74%)**

Indignants’ protest movement:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	6 (60.0%)	3 (42.9%)	3 (50.0%)	**12 (52.17%)**
No	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**4 (17.39%)**
I don’t know	-	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**5 (21.74%)**

Arrest of blogger Geron Pastitsios:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	6 (60.0%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (16.7%)	**9 (39.13%)**
No	1 (10.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**5 (21.74%)**
I don't know	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	3 (50.0%)	**7 (30.43%)**

Arrest of journalist Kostas Vaxevanis:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	6 (60.0%)	-	4 (66.7%)	**10 (43.48%)**
No	-	3 (42.9%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
I don't know	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**4 (17.39%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**6 (26.09%)**

Skouries mining controversy:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	8 (80.0%)	1 (14.3%)	4 (66.7%)	**13 (56.52%)**
No	-	3 (42.9%)	-	**3 (13.04%)**
I don't know	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**6 (26.09%)**

Manolada controversy:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	6 (60.0%)	1 (14.3%)	3 (50.0%)	**10 (43.48%)**
No	2 (20.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**
I don't know	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**6 (26.09%)**

Shutdown of ERT:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	6 (60.0%)	3 (42.9%)	3 (50.0%)	**12 (52.17%)**
No	2 (20.0%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (16.7%)	**6 (26.09%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**5 (21.74%)**

Murder of Pavlos Fyssas:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	5 (50.0%)	2 (28.6%)	3 (50.0%)	**10 (43.48%)**
No	3 (30.0%)	4 (57.1%)	1 (16.7%)	**8 (34.78%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**5 (21.74%)**

Golden Dawn arrests:

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	4 (40.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**8 (34.78%)**
No	4 (40.0%)	4 (57.1%)	1 (16.7%)	**9 (39.13%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	3 (50.0%)	**6 (26.09%)**

F11: How would you gauge the impact of social media and new media in inspiring protest movements in Greece in recent years? (1 = no influence, 5 = extremely significant influence)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (11.1%)	-	-	**1 (5.00%)**
2	-	-	-	**-**
3	2 (22.2%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (50.0%)	**7 (35.00%)**
4	2 (22.2%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (25.0%)	**6 (30.00%)**
5	4 (44.4%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (25.0%)	**6 (30.00%)**
No answer	1	-	2	**3 (13.04%)**
Mean	3.89	3.71	3.75	**3.80**
Median	4	4	3.5	**4**
Mode	5	3, 4	3	**3, 4**

F12: In your opinion, what was the impact of social media and new media in inspiring the Syntagma Square indignants' protest movement in 2011? (1 = no influence, 5 = extremely significant influence)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	1 (11.1%)	-	-	**1 (4.76%)**
2	1 (11.1%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (9.52%)**
3	1 (11.1%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (40.0%)	**5 (23.81%)**
4	1 (11.1%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (20.0%)	**5 (23.81%)**
5	5 (55.6%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (40.0%)	**8 (38.10%)**
No answer	1	-	1	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	3.89	3.57	4.00	**3.81**
Median	5	4	4	**4**
Mode	5	4	3, 5	**5**

F13: Do you believe that a movement such as the protest of the indignants in Syntagma Square would have been possible without the usage of new media and social media?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	2 (20.0%)	-	-	**2 (8.70%)**
Probably Yes	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	1 (16.7%)	**4 (17.39%)**
Probably No	5 (50.0%)	6 (85.7%)	2 (33.3%)	**13 (56.52%)**
No	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
No answer	1 (10.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**3 (13.04%)**

G. THE BLOGOSPHERE

G1: Do you believe that, generally, blogs are a credible source of news and information? (1 = not at all credible, 5 = very credible)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	4 (44.4%)	-	1 (20.0%)	**5 (23.81%)**
2	3 (33.3%)	5 (71.4%)	1 (20.0%)	**9 (42.86%)**
3	2 (22.2%)	1 (14.3%)	3 (60.0%)	**5 (23.81%)**
4	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.76%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	1	-	1	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	1.78	2.43	2.40	**2.00**
Median	2	2	3	**2**
Mode	1	2	3	**2**

G2: Do you believe that blogs have contributed to a decline in popularity of mainstream media in Greece?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	3 (30.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**7 (30.43%)**
Probably Yes	4 (40.0%)	4 (57.1%)	1 (16.7%)	**9 (39.13%)**
Probably No	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**4 (17.39%)**
No	1 (10.0%)	-	-	**1 (4.35%)**
No answer	1 (10.0%)	-	1 (16.7%)	**2 (8.70%)**

G3: Do you believe that blogs have made a positive or negative impact on the quality of news and information received by the Greek public? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	2 (22.2%)	-	-	**2 (9.52%)**
2	2 (22.2%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (20.0%)	**6 (28.57%)**
3	4 (44.4%)	3 (42.9%)	1 (20.0%)	**8 (38.10%)**
4	-	1 (14.3%)	3 (60.0%)	**4 (19.05%)**
5	1 (11.1%)	-	-	**1 (4.76%)**
No answer	1	-	1	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	2.56	2.71	3.40	**2.81**
Median	3	3	4	**3**
Mode	3	2, 3	4	**3**

G4: Do you support the continuation of anonymous blogs and postings on the Internet? (1 = under no circumstances, 5 = always, under all circumstances)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	3 (33.3%)	3 (50.0%)	-	**6 (30.00%)**
2	1 (11.1%)	-	1 (20.0%)	**2 (10.00%)**
3	1 (11.1%)	1 (16.7%)	1 (20.0%)	**3 (15.00%)**
4	1 (11.1%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**2 (10.00%)**
5	3 (33.3%)	1 (16.7%)	3 (60.0%)	**7 (35.00%)**
No answer	1	1	1	**3 (13.04%)**
Mean	3.00	2.50	4.00	**3.10**
Median	3	2	5	**3**
Mode	1, 5	1	5	**5**

G5: Do you believe that the publication of anonymous blogs or news articles on the Internet should be outlawed?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	-	2 (28.6%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
No	6 (60.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**10 (43.48%)**
Only under certain circumstances	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**6 (26.09%)**
No answer	2 (20.0%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	**5 (21.74%)**

G6: Do you believe that anonymity diminishes the trustworthiness of a blog or news article on the Internet? (1 = not at all, 5 = very much)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	2 (22.2%)	-	2 (40.0%)	**4 (19.05%)**
2	2 (22.2%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**3 (14.29%)**
3	2 (22.2%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (40.0%)	**6 (28.57%)**
4	1 (11.1%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**3 (14.29%)**
5	2 (22.2%)	2 (28.6%)	1 (20.0%)	**5 (23.81%)**
No answer	1	-	1	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	2.89	3.71	2.60	**3.10**
Median	3	4	3	**3**
Mode	1, 2, 3, 5	3, 4, 5	1, 3	**3**

G7: As a whole, do you believe that blogs and new media outlets, in your view, are truly independent of the government and of existing power structures in the country?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	1 (10.0%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (8.70%)**
No	8 (80.0%)	6 (85.7%)	3 (50.0%)	**17 (73.91%)**
I don't know	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
No answer	1 (10.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**3 (13.04%)**

G8: Would you consider news blogs in Greece representative examples of "citizen journalism"?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Yes	-	1 (14.3%)	-	**1 (4.35%)**
Probably Yes	2 (20.0%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (33.3%)	**6 (26.09%)**
Probably No	3 (30.0%)	4 (57.1%)	1 (16.7%)	**8 (34.78%)**
No	4 (40.0%)	-	-	**4 (17.39%)**
I don't know	-	-	1 (16.7%)	**1 (4.35%)**
No answer	1 (10.0%)	-	2 (33.3%)	**3 (13.04%)**

G9: To what extent do you believe blogs have promoted and encouraged "citizen journalism" in Greece? (1 = not at all, 5 = very much)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	2 (22.2%)	-	-	**2 (9.52%)**
2	1 (11.1%)	3 (42.9%)	-	**4 (19.05%)**
3	3 (33.3%)	2 (28.6%)	2 (40.0%)	**7 (33.33%)**
4	2 (22.2%)	2 (28.6%)	3 (60.0%)	**7 (33.33%)**
5	1 (11.1%)	-	-	**1 (4.76%)**
No answer	1	-	1	**2 (8.70%)**
Mean	2.89	3.33	3.60	**3.05**
Median	3	3	4	**3**
Mode	3	2	4	**3, 4**

G10: How many news blogs do you read regularly (at least once per week)?

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Mean	7.25	2.25	26.25	**10.75**
No response	2	3	2	**7**
Standard deviation				**23.68**
Minimum	15	0	0	**0**
1st quartile (Q1)				**0.25**
2nd quartile (median)	10			**3.5**
3rd quartile (Q3)				**10**
Maximum	80	6	100	**100**

G11: Name up to three (3) news blogs which you read regularly

Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
Zoornalistas (2) Arouraios Fimotro Fonaklas no14me Nonews-news Press-GR Sibilia-Press *No answers provided by 7 respondents*	defencenet.gr (2) Xryshaygh (2) makeleio.gr myblogs.gr/source/ efimerida-stohos *No answers provided by 5 respondents*	apenantioxthi.com bluebig.wordpress. com logiosermis.net pitsirikos.net *No answers provided by 4 respondents*	defencenet.gr (2) Xryshaygh (2) zoornalistas (2) apenantioxthi.com Arouraios bluebig.wordpress. com Fimotro Fonaklas logiosermis.net makeleio.gr myblogs.gr/source/ efimerida-stohos no14me nonews-news pitsirikos.net Press-GR Sibilia-Press *No answers provided by 16 respondents*

H. CIVIL SOCIETY

H1: In your opinion, how well developed was the civil society sphere in Greece in the post-junta period? (1 = not at all developed, 5 = extremely well developed)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	2 (28.6%)	-	2 (40.0%)	**4 (22.22%)**
2	1 (14.3%)	2 (33.3%)	2 (40.0%)	**5 (27.78%)**
3	1 (14.3%)	4 (66.7%)	1 (20.0%)	**6 (33.33%)**
4	3 (42.9%)	-	-	**3 (16.67%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	3	1	1	**5 (21.74%)**
Mean	2.71	2.67	2.25	**2.44**
Median	3	3	2	**2.5**
Mode	4	3	1, 2	**3**

H2: In your opinion, is the civil society sphere in Greece well developed today? (1 = not at all developed, 5 = extremely well developed)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	2 (28.6%)	1 (14.3%)	2 (40.0%)	**5 (26.32%)**
2	3 (42.9%)	2 (28.6%)	-	**5 (26.32%)**
3	2 (28.6%)	4 (57.1%)	2 (40.0%)	**8 (42.11%)**
4	-	-	1 (20.0%)	**1 (5.26%)**
5	-	-	-	**-**
No answer	3	-	1	**4 (17.39%)**
Mean	2.00	2.43	2.40	**2.26**
Median	2	3	3	**2**
Mode	2	3	1, 3	**3**

H3: How would you gauge the impact of social and new media tools in fostering the growth or development of civil society initiatives in Greece? (1 = no influence, 5 = extremely significant influence)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	**-**
2	1 (12.5%)	1 (14.3%)	-	**2 (10.00%)**
3	2 (25.0%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (40.0%)	**7 (35.00%)**
4	3 (37.5%)	3 (42.9%)	2 (40.0%)	**8 (40.00%)**
5	2 (25.0%)	-	1 (20.0%)	**3 (15.00%)**
No answer	2	-	1	**3 (13.04%)**
Mean	3.75	3.29	3.80	**3.60**
Median	4	3	4	**4**
Mode	4	3, 4	3, 4	**4**

H4: How would you gauge the impact of social and new media tools in fostering the growth or development of civil society initiatives in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

	Editors	Euro MPs	Civil Society	TOTAL
1	-	-	-	
2	1 (16.7%)	1 (16.7%)	-	**2 (11.76%)**
3	2 (33.3%)	3 (50.0%)	2 (40.0%)	**7 (41.18%)**
4	2 (33.3%)	2 (33.3%)	2 (40.0%)	**6 (35.29%)**
5	1 (16.7%)	-	1 (20.0%)	**2 (11.76%)**
No answer	4	1	1	**6 (26.09%)**
Mean	3.50	3.17	3.80	**3.47**
Median	3.5	3	4	**3**
Mode	3, 4	3	3, 4	**3**

I. QUESTIONS FOR NEWSPAPER EDITORS (JOURNALISTS)

I1: Does your newspaper utilize the following social and new media tools? (select all that apply)

Overall:

Yes	**6 (60.0%)**
No	**2 (20.0%)**
No answer	**2 (20.0%)**

Breakdown:

Facebook	**6 (60.0%)**
Online video	**6 (60.0%)**
Twitter	**5 (50.0%)**
User comments	**5 (50.0%)**
RSS feed	**5 (50.0%)**
YouTube	**4 (40.0%)**
Blogs	**1 (10.0%)**
Google+	**1 (10.0%)**

I2: Which of the following social media tools is most used by your newspaper? (select one)

Facebook	**3 (30.0%)**
Twitter	**3 (30.0%)**
None	**1 (10.0%)**
No answer	**3 (30.0%)**

I3: Which social media outlets do you use as part of your professional work as a journalist? (select all that are applicable)

Twitter	**8 (80.0%)**
Facebook	**7 (70.0%)**
YouTube	**5 (50.0%)**
Google+	**4 (40.0%)**
Blogs	**2 (20.0%)**
LinkedIn	**2 (20.0%)**
Instagram	**1 (10.0%)**

I4: Which social media outlet do you use the most as part of your professional work as a journalist? (select one)

Twitter	**4 (40.0%)**
Facebook	**3 (30.0%)**
Blogs	**1 (10.0%)**
No answer	**2 (20.0%)**

I5A: How would you gauge the impact of social media and new media on the quality of your newspaper's journalism? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**1 (12.5%)**
2	**-**
3	**3 (37.5%)**
4	**1 (12.5%)**
5	**3 (37.5%)**
No answer	**2**
Mean	**3.63**
Median	**3.5**
Mode	**3, 5**

I5B: How would you gauge the impact of social media and new media on the quality of your newspaper's journalism? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**3 (50.0%)**
4	**1 (16.7%)**
5	**2 (33.3%)**
No answer	**4**
Mean	**3.83**
Median	**3.5**
Mode	**3**

I6A: How would you gauge the impact of social media and new media on your ability to perform your job as a journalist? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**1 (12.5%)**
3	**2 (25.0%)**
4	**2 (25.0%)**
5	**3 (37.5%)**
No answer	**2**
Mean	**3.88**
Median	**4**
Mode	**5**

I6B: How would you gauge the impact of social media and new media on your ability to perform your job as a journalist? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**1 (16.7%)**
3	**2 (33.3%)**
4	**2 (33.3%)**
5	**1 (16.7%)**
No answer	**4**
Mean	**3.50**
Median	**3.50**
Mode	**3, 4**

I7: Does your newspaper require you to maintain a social media presence as a journalist?

Yes	**-**
No	**9 (90.0%)**
No answer	**1 (10.0%)**

I8: Do you interact with the public/with your readers via social media, as part of your journalistic capacity?

Yes	**8 (80.0%)**
No	**1 (10.0%)**
No answer	**1 (10.0%)**

I9: Do you believe that the newspaper where you are employed is experiencing a credibility crisis?

Yes	**4 (40.0%)**
No	**5 (50.0%)**
No answer	**1 (10.0%)**

I10: Which Internet tools are used by the newspaper where you are employed? (select all that apply)

Online .pdf edition of newspaper	**7 (70.0%)**
Exclusive online content	**6 (60.0%)**
Online newsletter	**5 (50.0%)**
Online video/web TV	**4 (40.0%)**
Internet radio	**2 (20.0%)**
None of the above	**1 (10.0%)**

I11A: How would you gauge your newspaper's impact on the Greek public sphere and on public discourse in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**1 (11.1%)**
3	**2 (22.2%)**
4	**4 (44.4%)**
5	**2 (22.2%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**3.78**
Median	**4**
Mode	**4**

I11B: How would you gauge your newspaper's impact on the Greek public sphere and on public discourse in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**2 (33.3%)**
4	**2 (33.3%)**
5	**2 (33.3%)**
No answer	**4**
Mean	**4.00**
Median	**4**
Mode	**4**

I12A: How would you gauge the impact of the online presence of your newspaper on the Greek public sphere and on public discourse in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**2 (22.2%)**
2	**-**
3	**4 (44.4%)**
4	**1 (11.1%)**
5	**2 (22.2%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**3.11**
Median	**3**
Mode	**3**

I12B: How would you gauge the impact of the online presence of your newspaper on the Greek public sphere and on public discourse in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**3 (50.0%)**
4	**2 (33.3%)**
5	**1 (16.7%)**
No answer	**4**
Mean	**3.67**
Median	**3.5**
Mode	**3**

I13: How would you rate the overall quality of your newspaper's online and social media presence? (1 = very poor, 5 = very good)

1	**1 (11.1%)**
2	**2 (22.2%)**
3	**4 (44.4%)**
4	**-**
5	**2 (22.2%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**3.00**
Median	**3**
Mode	**3**

I14: Does your newspaper maintain a dedicated staff exclusively for its online and social media presence?

Yes	**8 (80.0%)**
No	**1 (10.0%)**
No answer	**1 (10.0%)**

I15A: How would you gauge the impact of the online presence of your newspaper on the poltical sphere and political discourse in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**2 (22.2%)**
2	**1 (11.1%)**
3	**1 (11.1%)**
4	**3 (33.3%)**
5	**2 (22.2%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**3.22**
Median	**3.5**
Mode	**4**

I15B: How would you gauge the impact of the online presence of your newspaper on the poltical sphere and political discourse in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**1 (16.7%)**
3	**3 (50.0%)**
4	**1 (16.7%)**
5	**1 (16.7%)**
No answer	**4**
Mean	**3.33**
Median	**3**
Mode	**3**

I16: How would you gauge the reach and popularity of your newspaper's online and social media presence, amongst the public? (1 = extremely limited, 5 = very widespread)

1	**1 (11.1%)**
2	**4 (44.4%)**
3	**1 (11.1%)**
4	**2 (22.2%)**
5	**1 (11.1%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**2.78**
Median	**2**
Mode	**2**

I17: In your opinion, is self-censorship on the part of professional journalists common in Greek journalism today?

Yes	**5 (50.0%)**
Probably Yes	**4 (40.0%)**
Probably No	**-**
No	**-**
I don't know	**-**
No answer	**1 (10.0%)**

I18A: In your opinion, how and to what extent have social and new media contributed to self-censorship on the part of professional journalists in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**2 (28.6%)**
2	**1 (14.3%)**
3	**2 (28.6%)**
4	**2 (28.6%)**
5	**-**
No answer	**3**
Mean	**2.57**
Median	**3**
Mode	**1, 3, 4**

I18B: In your opinion, how and to what extent have social and new media contributed to self-censorship on the part of professional journalists in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**1 (16.7%)**
2	**-**
3	**3 (50.0%)**
4	**2 (33.3%)**
5	**-**
No answer	**4**
Mean	**3.00**
Median	**3**
Mode	**3**

I19: Do you consider social and new media an important means of generating visitors and readers to your newspaper?

Yes	**7 (70.0%)**
No	**1 (10.0%)**
No answer	**2 (20.0%)**

I20: In your estimation, what percentage of page views for your newspaper's website originate from links posted on social media?

Mean	**45.71%**
Standard deviation	**17.61**
Minimum	**20**
1st quartile (Q1)	**30**
2nd quartile (median)	**50**
3rd quartile (Q3)	**60**
Maximum	**70**
Mode	**30, 60**
No answer	**3**

I21A: How significant do you anticipate the role of new media and social media will be in the journalistic realm in Greece in the next few years? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**2 (22.2%)**
4	**4 (44.4%)**
5	**3 (33.3%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**4.44**
Median	**4**
Mode	**4**

I21B: How significant do you anticipate the role of new media and social media will be in the journalistic realm in Greece in the next few years? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**2 (28.6%)**
4	**4 (57.1%)**
5	**1 (14.3%)**
No answer	**3**
Mean	**3.86**
Median	**4**
Mode	**4**

J. QUESTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT/ POLITICIANS

J1: Which party do you belong to/represent?

New Democracy	**2 (28.6%)**
Golden Dawn	**2 (28.6%)**
SYRIZA	**1 (14.3%)**
No answer	**2 (28.6%)**

Note: above answers as identified by the respondents themselves.

J2: Were you previously a candidate in any of the following types of electoral contests? (select all that are applicable)

I was never a candidate prior to this year's elections	**4 (57.1%)**
May 2012 Greek Parliamentary Elections	**1 (14.3%)**
June 2012 Greek Parliamentary Elections	**1 (14.3%)**

J3: Which party were you a member of in your previous electoral campaign?

Golden Dawn	**2 (28.6%)**
New Democracy	**1 (14.3%)**
Other (LAOS)	**1 (14.3%)**
I was not a candidate in any previous election	**1 (14.3%)**
No answer	**2 (28.6%)**

J4: Do you maintain an official social media account (or accounts) as part of your position as a member of the European Parliament?

Yes	**6 (85.7%)**
No	**-**
No answer	**1 (14.3%)**

J5: On which social media outlets do you maintain an official account, as part of your position as a member of European Parliament? (select all that are applicable)

Facebook	**6 (85.7%)**
Twitter	**3 (42.9%)**
YouTube	**3 (42.9%)**
LinkedIn	**2 (28.6%)**
Google+	**2 (28.6%)**
Instagram	**1 (14.3%)**
Other	**1 (14.3%)**

J6: Did you use one or more social media outlets as part of your electoral campaign this year?

Yes	**6 (85.7%)**
No	**-**
No answer	**1 (14.3%)**

J7: Which social media outlets did you use as part of your electoral campaign, in this year's elections? (select all that apply)

Facebook	**5 (71.4%)**
Twitter	**2 (28.6%)**
YouTube	**2 (28.6%)**
LinkedIn	**1 (14.3%)**
Blogs	**1 (14.3%)**
None	**1 (14.3%)**

J8: Which social media outlet did you use the most as part of your electoral campaign for this year's elections? (select one)

Facebook	**4 (57.1%)**
Twitter	**1 (14.3%)**
None	**1 (14.3%)**
No answer	**1 (14.3%)**

J9: How would you gauge the impact of your social media presence during your electoral campaign this year? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**2 (40.0%)**
4	**2 (40.0%)**
5	**1 (20.0%)**
No answer	**2**
Mean	**3.80**
Median	**4**
Mode	**3, 4**

J10: Which social media outlet do you use the most today, as part of your position as a member of the European Parliament? (select one)

Facebook	**4 (57.1%)**
Blogs	**1 (14.3%)**
No answer	**2 (28.6%)**

J11A: How would you gauge the impact of social media on your work as a member of the European Parliament? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**2 (40.0%)**
4	**2 (40.0%)**
5	**1 (20.0%)**
No answer	**2**
Mean	**3.80**
Median	**4**
Mode	**3, 4**

J11B: How would you gauge the impact of social media on your work as a member of the European Parliament? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**2 (50.0%)**
4	**1 (25.0%)**
5	**1 (25.0%)**
No answer	**3**
Mean	**3.75**
Median	**3.5**
Mode	**3**

J12: Do you use and post on your official social media accounts personally, or do you utilize an adviser or other staffer for such purposes?

I maintain exclusive control over my social media accounts	**1 (14.3%)**
Another adviser or staffer maintains exclusive control over my social media accounts	**1 (14.3%)**
Both (I control my social media accounts alongside an adviser or staffer)	**2 (28.6%)**
No answer	**3 (42.9%)**

J13: Do you maintain interaction with your voters and the general public via your social media accounts?

Yes	**5 (71.4%)**
No	**-**
No answer	**2 (28.6%)**

J14: Have social media tools aided you in your ability to communicate with your constituents and the general public?

Yes	**5 (71.4%)**
No	**-**
No answer	**2 (28.6%)**

J15: Do you believe that trolling is a problem which significantly impacts the quality of online political discourse in Greece?

Yes	**5 (71.4%)**
No	**-**
No answer	**2 (28.6%)**

J16A: How would you gauge the impact and prevalence of trolling with regards to the political dialogue which takes place on the internet in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**1 (20.0%)**
3	**2 (40.0%)**
4	**1 (20.0%)**
5	**1 (20.0%)**
No answer	**2**
Mean	**3.40**
Median	**3**
Mode	**3**

J16B: How would you gauge the impact and prevalence of trolling with regards to the political dialogue which takes place on the internet in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**2 (50.0%)**
2	**1 (25.0%)**
3	**1 (25.0%)**
4	**-**
5	**-**
No answer	**3**
Mean	**1.75**
Median	**1.5**
Mode	**1**

J17: Does your political party maintain an official social media presence?

Yes	**5 (71.4%)**
No	**-**
No answer	**2 (28.6%)**

J18: On which social media platforms does your political party maintain an official presence? (select all that apply)

Facebook	**4 (57.1%)**
Twitter	**4 (57.1%)**
YouTube	**4 (57.1%)**
Blogs	**3 (42.9%)**
Google+	**1 (14.3%)**
Other	**1 (14.3%)**

J19: Which social media platform is used the most by your political party? (select one)

Facebook	**2 (28.6%)**
Blogs	**2 (28.6%)**
Twitter	**1 (14.3%)**
Other	**1 (14.3%)**
No answer	**1 (14.3%)**

J20: Did your political party use social media as part of its pre-election campaigning this year?

Yes	**6 (85.7%)**
No	**-**
No answer	**1 (14.3%)**

J21A: How would you characterize the impact of social media on your party's electoral performance in the two parliamentary elections of 2012? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**1 (20.0%)**
3	**2 (40.0%)**
4	**-**
5	**2 (40.0%)**
No answer	**2**
Mean	**3.60**
Median	**3**
Mode	**3, 5**

J21B: How would you characterize the impact of social media on your party's electoral performance in the two parliamentary elections of 2012? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**1 (25.0%)**
2	**-**
3	**2 (50.0%)**
4	**-**
5	**1 (25.0%)**
No answer	**3**
Mean	**3.00**
Median	**3**
Mode	**3**

J22A: How would you characterize the impact of the social media on this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**1 (20.0%)**
3	**1 (20.0%)**
4	**1 (20.0%)**
5	**2 (40.0%)**
No answer	**2**
Mean	**3.80**
Median	**4**
Mode	**5**

J22B: How would you characterize the impact of the social media on this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**1 (25.0%)**
3	**1 (25.0%)**
4	**1 (25.0%)**
5	**1 (25.0%)**
No answer	**3**
Mean	**3.50**
Median	**3.5**
Mode	**2, 3, 4, 5**

J23: Which social media tools were used by your political party as part of its campaign efforts for this year's European parliamentary elections? (select all that are applicable)

Facebook	**6 (85.7%)**
YouTube	**5 (71.4%)**
Twitter	**4 (57.1%)**
Blogs	**2 (28.6%)**
LinkedIn	**1 (14.3%)**
Google+	**1 (14.3%)**
Other	**1 (14.3%)**

J24: Which social media tool was used the most by your political party as part of its campaign efforts for this year's European parliamentary elections? (select one)

Facebook	**2 (28.6%)**
Blogs	**2 (28.6%)**
Twitter	**1 (14.3%)**
Other	**1 (14.3%)**
No answer	**1 (14.3%)**

J25: How many hours per day, on average, do you dedicate for the maintenance of your online presence and your social media accounts?

None	**-**
Less than 1 hour	**1 (14.3%)**
1-2 hours	**3 (42.9%)**
2-4 hours	**1 (14.3%)**
More than 4 hours	**-**
No answer	**2 (28.6%)**

J26: In which way(s) do you use social and new media tools to communicate with your constituents and with the public at large? (select all that apply)

Answering messages from your constituents	**6 (85.7%)**
Publicizing news about yourself and your political activity	**6 (85.7%)**
Publicizing articles you have written	**6 (85.7%)**
Publicizing press releases	**5 (71.4%)**
Replying to comments or tweets on social media	**5 (71.4%)**
Political commentary	**5 (71.4%)**
Posting multimedia: photos, video, audio, podcasts, etc.	**5 (71.4%)**
Publication/distribution of newsletter	**4 (57.1%)**
Communication with other members of the European Parliament	**4 (57.1%)**
Communication with other members of your political party	**3 (42.9%)**
Communication with journalists	**3 (42.9%)**
Reposting news about your political party	**3 (42.9%)**
Following other politicians' social media accounts	**3 (42.9%)**
Following other political parties' social media accounts	**3 (42.9%)**
Posting non-political content about yourself	**3 (42.9%)**
Communication with European Union officials	**2 (28.6%)**
Communication with international officials	**2 (28.6%)**
Reposting articles/websites from other sources	**2 (28.6%)**
Following social media accounts of journalists or media outlets	**2 (28.6%)**
Communication with other politicians in Greece	**1 (14.3%)**

J27: Does your political party maintain an official policy for how its members of parliament and other officials can conduct themselves on the Internet and on social media accounts?

Yes	**2 (28.6%)**
No	**2 (28.6%)**
No answer	**3 (42.9%)**

J28: Will you be a candidate in the next European parliamentary elections?

Yes	**2 (28.6%)**
No	**-**
I don't know	**3 (42.9%)**
No answer	**2 (28.6%)**

J29: Do you plan to run as a candidate in the next national parliamentary elections?

Yes	-
No	**2 (28.6%)**
I don’t know	**3 (42.9%)**
No answer	**2 (28.6%)**

J30: Do you plan to increase your usage of new media and social media tools in the next electoral contest that you will participate in?

Yes	**4 (57.1%)**
No	-
No answer	**3 (42.9%)**

J31: Does the feedback that you receive from the public via the Internet and social media impact your positions or your political work? (1 = never, 5 = very often)

1	-
2	**2 (40.0%)**
3	**2 (40.0%)**
4	-
5	**1 (20.0%)**
No answer	**2**
Mean	**3.00**
Median	**3**
Mode	**2, 3**

J32: Did you make changes in the way you incorporated social and new media into your campaigning in this year's elections, compared to the previous electoral contest?

Yes	**1 (14.3%)**
No	**1 (14.3%)**
Not applicable	**2 (28.6%)**
No answer	**3 (42.9%)**

J33: Do you/did you consider social media to be an official part of your pre-election campaign in this year's European parliamentary elections?

Yes	**6 (85.7%)**
No	-
No answer	**1 (14.3%)**

J34: Do you believe that your political party more heavily emphasized social media in its campaigning this year, compared to its campaigning prior to the 2012 elections?

Yes	**5 (71.4%)**
No	**-**
No answer	**2 (28.6%)**

J35A: How significant do you anticipate the role of new media and social media will be in the Greek political landscape in the next few years? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**1 (16.7%)**
4	**4 (66.7%)**
5	**1 (16.7%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**4.00**
Median	**4**
Mode	**4**

J35B: How significant do you anticipate the role of new media and social media will be in the Greek political landscape in the next few years? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**1 (20.0%)**
3	**2 (40.0%)**
4	**1 (20.0%)**
5	**1 (20.0%)**
No answer	**2**
Mean	**3.40**
Median	**3**
Mode	**3**

K. QUESTIONS FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF CIVIL SOCIETY/CITIZENS' MOVEMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS

K1: Which social media tools are used by your organization/movement? (select all which are applicable)

Facebook	**5 (83.3%)**
Twitter	**4 (66.7%)**
Blogs	**3 (50.0%)**
Google+	**3 (50.0%)**
YouTube	**2 (33.3%)**
LinkedIn	**2 (33.3%)**
Forums and message boards	**1 (16.7%)**

K2: In which way(s) do you use social and new media tools to communicate with your members/volunteers and the public at large? (Select all that are applicable)

Publicizing your meetings and events	**5 (83.3%)**
Publicizing news about your movement/organization	**4 (66.7%)**
Posting multimedia: photos, video, audio, podcasts, etc.	**4 (66.7%)**
Organizing your meetings and events	**3 (50.0%)**
Commentary on relevant issues	**3 (50.0%)**
Republishing news and content from other websites	**3 (50.0%)**
Communication and interaction with the public	**2 (33.3%)**
Holding online meetings or chats	**1 (16.7%)**
Recruiting new members or volunteers	**-**
Fundraising or requesting donations	**-**

K3A: How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media tools in your organization's/movement's growth and development? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**1 (20.0%)**
4	**1 (20.0%)**
5	**3 (60.0%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**4.40**
Median	**5**
Mode	**5**

K3B: How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media tools in your organization's/movement's growth and development? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**-**
4	**2 (40.0%)**
5	**3 (60.0%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**4.60**
Median	**5**
Mode	**5**

K4A: How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media tools for the purposes of recruiting new members or volunteers to your organization or movement? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**-**
4	**2 (40.0%)**
5	**3 (60.0%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**4.60**
Median	**5**
Mode	**5**

K4B: How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media tools for the purposes of recruiting new members or volunteers to your organization or movement? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**-**
4	**3 (60.0%)**
5	**2 (40.0%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**4.40**
Median	**4**
Mode	**4**

K5A: How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media tools in your movement's or organization's day-to-day operations and activities? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**-**
4	**2 (40.0%)**
5	**3 (60.0%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**4.60**
Median	**5**
Mode	**5**

K5B: How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media tools in your movement's or organization's day-to-day operations and activities (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**-**
4	**2 (40.0%)**
5	**3 (60.0%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**4.60**
Median	**5**
Mode	**5**

K6A: How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media tools in terms of your ability to interact and communicate with the general public? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**-**
4	**2 (40.0%)**
5	**3 (60.0%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**4.60**
Median	**5**
Mode	**5**

K6B: How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media tools in terms of your ability to interact and communicate with the general public (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**-**
4	**2 (40.0%)**
5	**3 (60.0%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**4.60**
Median	**5**
Mode	**5**

K7: Was your organization or movement established, in whole or in part, via the social media?

Yes (if yes, mention which in comment box)	**2 (33.3%)**
No	**2 (33.3%)**
No answer	**2 (33.3%)**
Answers provided for yes:	**Facebook** **Blog**

K8: Have social media tools helped your movement/organization communicate with or coordinate action with other citizens' groups, movements or similar organizations?

Yes	**5 (83.3%)**
No	**-**
No answer	**1 (16.7%)**

K9A: How significant do you anticipate the role of new media and social media will be in the operations of your movement or organization in the next few years? (1 = not significant, 5 = very significant)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**-**
4	**2 (40.0%)**
5	**3 (60.0%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**4.60**
Median	**5**
Mode	**5**

K9B: How significant do you anticipate the role of new media and social media will be in the operations of your movement or organization in the next few years? (1 = very negative, 5 = very positive)

1	**-**
2	**-**
3	**-**
4	**2 (40.0%)**
5	**3 (60.0%)**
No answer	**1**
Mean	**4.60**
Median	**5**
Mode	**5**

K10: What year was your organization/group established?

2012	**3 (50.0%)**
No answer	**3 (50.0%)**

K11: Was the establishment of your organization/group influenced or inspired by the protests of the Indignants in 2011?

Yes	**2 (33.3%)**
No	**2 (33.3%)**
No answer	**2 (33.3%)**

APPENDIX 5: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

All Questions Are Optional - Όλες οι Ερωτήσεις Είναι Προεραιτικές

Α. ΕΙΣΑΓΩΓΗ - A. INTRODUCTION:

1.	**Ποια είναι η ηλικία σας;**	**What is your age?**	_____
2.	**Γράψτε το φύλλο σας**	**State your gender**	_____
3.	**Πόλη κατοικίας**	**City of residence**	_____
4.	**Επιλέξτε σε ποια κατηγορία ανήκετε:**	**Please select the category you belong to**	a) Ευρωβουλευτής – Member of European Parliament b) Συντάκτης εφημερίδας – Newspaper editor c) Μέλος κινήματος/ομάδας πολιτών – Member of civil society organization

Β. ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗ ΥΠΟΣΤΗΡΙΞΗ - B. POLITICAL PREFERENCE:

1. Ποιο κόμμα υποστηρίξατε στις φετινές εκλογές του Ευρωπαϊκού κοινοβουλίου;

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None

1. Which political party did you support/vote for in this year's European Parliamentary elections?

2. Ποιο κόμμα υποστηρίξατε στις φετινές εκλογές της τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης;

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Ανεξάρτητο ή συνδυασμό / Independent or coalition
10) Άλλο / Other: _____
11) Κανένα / None

2. Which political party did you support/vote for in this year's local and municipal elections in Greece?

3. Ποιο κόμμα ψηφίσατε στις εκλογές του 2009 για το Ευρωπαϊκό κοινοβούλιο;

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) ΠΑΣΟΚ / PASOK
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
7) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
8) Άλλο / Other: _____
9) Κανένα / None
10) Δεν θυμάμαι / I don't recall

3. Which party did you vote for in the 2009 European parliamentary elections?

4. Ποιο κόμμα ψηφίσατε στις εκλογές για την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση του 2010;

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
7) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
8) Ανεξάρτητο ή συνδυασμό / Independent or coalition
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν θυμάμαι / I don't recall

4. Which party did you vote for in the 2010 local/municipal elections in Greece?

5. Ποιο κόμμα ψηφίσατε στις εθνικές βουλευτικές εκλογές του 2012 (1η αναμέτρηση);

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) ΠΑΣΟΚ / PASOK
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
7) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
8) Άλλο / Other: _____
9) Κανένα / None
10) Δεν θυμάμαι / I don't recall

5. Which party did you vote for in the national parliamentary elections of 2012 (1st election)?

6. Ποιο κόμμα ψηφίσατε στις εθνικές βουλευτικές εκλογές του 2012 (2η αναμέτρηση);

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) ΠΑΣΟΚ / PASOK
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
7) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
8) Άλλο / Other: _____
9) Κανένα / None
10) Δεν θυμάμαι / I don't recall

6. Which party did you vote for in the national parliamentary elections of 2012 (2nd election)?

Γ. ΠΡΟΣΩΠΙΚΗ ΧΡΗΣΗ ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΩΝ ΔΙΚΤΥΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΝΕΩΝ ΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΩΝ - C. PERSONAL USAGE OF SOCIAL AND NEW MEDIA TOOLS:

1. Χρησιμοποιείτε κάποιο εργαλείο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;
1) Ναι / Yes

1. Do you use any social media tools?
2) Όχι / No

2. Ποια εργαλεία κοινωνικής δικτύωσης χρησιμοποιείτε τουλάχιστον μία φορά την εβδομάδα; *(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)*
1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+
6) Reddit

2. Which social media tools do you use at least once per week? *(select all that are applicable)*
7) pinterest
8) Instagram
9) Μπλογκ - Blogs
10) Άλλο / Other: _____
11) Κανένα / None

3. Ποιο εργαλείο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης χρησιμοποιείτε περισσότερο; *(επιλέξτε ένα)*
1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+
6) Reddit

3. Which social media tool do you use the most? *(select one)*
7) pinterest
8) Instagram
9) Μπλογκ - Blogs
10) Άλλο / Other: _____
11) Κανένα / None

4. Χρησιμοποιείτε τα εργαλεία κοινωνικής δικτύωσης για να ενημερώνεστε για την επικαιρότητα;
1) Ναι / Yes

4. Do you use social media for getting news and information?
2) Όχι / No

5. Χρησιμοποιείτε τα εργαλεία κοινωνικής δικτύωσης για να γράφετε ή να σχολιάζετε για πολιτικά, οικονομικά ή κοινωνικά θέματα;
1) Ναι / Yes

5. Do you use social media for writing or commenting on political, economic, or social issues?
2) Όχι / No

6. Αν απαντήσατε ναι στην προηγούμενη ερώτηση, ποιο εργαλείο χρησιμοποιείτε περισσότερο για να γράφετε ή να σχολιάζετε αυτά τα θέματα; *(επιλέξτε ένα)*
1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+
6) Reddit

6. If you answered yes for the previous question, which social media outlet do you use the most for the purposes of writing or commenting on political, economic, or social issues? *(select one)*
7) pinterest
8) Instagram
9) Blogs
10) Άλλο / Other: _____
11) Δεν με αφορά / Not applicable

7. Έχετε χρησιμοποιήσει ποτέ κάποιο εργαλείο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης για να επικοινωνήσετε με κάποιο συμβατικό μέσο ενημέρωσης (εφημερίδα, τηλεοπτικός σταθμός, ραδιοφωνικός σταθμός);

1) Ναι / Yes

7. Have you ever used a social media tool to communicate with a mainstream media outlet, such as a newspaper, television station, or radio station?

2) Όχι / No

8. Έχετε χρησιμοποιήσει ποτέ κάποιο εργαλείο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης για να επικοινωνήσετε με κάποιον πολιτικό, υποψήφιο για πολιτικό αξίωμα, ή κάποιο πολιτικό κόμμα;

1) Ναι / Yes

8. Have you used a social media tool to communicate with a politician, political party, or political candidate?

2) Όχι / No

9. Ποια μέσα ενημέρωσης/επικοινωνίας χρησιμοποιείτε για να ενημερώνεστε για την επικαιρότητα; ***(rank from 1-5 from most to least utilized)***

___ Τηλεόραση / Television
___ Ραδιόφωνο / Radio
___ Εφημερίδες / Newspapers
___ Περιοδικά / Magazines

9. What media outlets do you use for the purposes of getting news and information? ***(rank from 1-5 from most to least utilized)***

___ Διαδίκτυο / Internet
___ Άλλο / Other: _____
___ Κανένα / None

10. Ποια από τα ακόλουθα "εναλλακτικά" μέσα ενημέρωσης/επικοινωνίας χρησιμοποιείτε για να ενημερώνεστε για την επικαιρότητα; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Διαδικτυακό ραδιόφωνο / Internet radio
2) Διαδικτυακή τηλεόραση / Internet television
3) Blogs
4) Πειρατικό ραδιόφωνο / Pirate radio

10. Which of the following "non-traditional" media outlets do you use for the purposes of getting news and information? ***(select all that are applicable)***

5) Εναλλακτικά έντυπα / Alternative print media
6) Άλλο / Other: _____
7) Κανένα / None

11. Παρακολουθείτε κάποιον λογαριασμό πολιτικού προσώπου ή υποψηφίου στα κοινωνικά δίκτυα;

1) Ναι / Yes

11. Do you follow the social media accounts of any politician or political candidate?

2) Όχι / No

12. Αν απαντήσατε ναι στην προηγούμενη ερώτηση, ποίον πολιτικό/ποιούς πολιτικούς παρακολουθείτε για οποιονδήποτε λόγο; ***(Ονομάστε μέχρι 5)***

12. If you answered yes to the previous question, which politician(s) or candidate(s) do you follow for any reason? ***(Name up to 5)***

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

13. Παρακολουθείτε κάποιον λογαριασμό πολιτικού κόμματος στα κοινωνικά δίκτυα;
1) Ναι / Yes
2) Όχι / No

13. Do you follow the social media accounts of any political parties?

14. Αν απαντήσατε ναι στην προηγούμενη ερώτηση, ποιο/α κόμμα/τα παρακολουθείτε; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***
1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Δεν με αφορά / Not applicable

14. If you answered yes to the previous question, which party/parties do you follow? ***(select all that are applicable)***

Δ. ΕΝΤΥΠΩΣΕΙΣ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΑΞΙΟΠΙΣΤΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΧΡΗΣΗ ΤΩΝ ΜΕΣΩΝ ΜΑΖΙΚΗΣ ΕΝΗΜΕΡΩΣΗΣ/ΕΠΙΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑΣ - D. TRUSTWORTHINESS AND PREVALENCE OF THE MASS MEDIA

1. Πιστεύετε πως τα κοινωνικά δίκτυα και τα νέα μέσα ενημέρωσης/επικοινωνίας έχουν συμβάλλει σε πτώση της χρήσης των συμβατικών μέσων ενημέρωσης (εφημερίδες, τηλεοπτικοί σταθμοί, ραδιοφωνικοί σταθμοί) στην Ελλάδα;
1) Ναι / Yes
2) Όχι / No
3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

1. Do you believe that social and new media have contributed to a decline in popularity of the mainstream media (newspapers, television stations, radio stations) in Greece?

2. Αν απαντήσατε ναι στην προηγούμενη ερώτηση, πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επιρροή των κοινωνικών δικτύων και των νέων μέσων στην πτώση της χρήσης των συμβατικών μέσων ενημέρωσης;

1 2 3 4 5
(μικρή επιρροή) (μέγαλη επιρροή)
(small impact) (large impact)

2. If you answered yes to the previous question, how would you evaluate the impact of social and new media in the decline in popularity of the mainstream media?

3. Πως αξιολογείτε την αξιοπιστία των ακόλουθων μέσων ενημέρωσης/επικοινωνίας στην Ελλάδα;

3. How do you evaluate the trustworthiness of each of the following types of media in Greece?

	(αναξιόπιστο) (not credible)				(πολύ αξιόπιστο) (credible)
1) Τηλεόραση / Television	1	2	3	4	5
2) Ραδιόφωνο / Radio	1	2	3	4	5
3) Εφημερίδες / Newspapers	1	2	3	4	5
4) Περιοδικά / Magazines	1	2	3	4	5
5) Διαδίκτυο / Internet	1	2	3	4	5

4. Πιστεύετε πως υπάρχει κρίση εμπιστοσύνης του κοινού ως προς τα συμβατικά μέσα ενημέρωσης στην Ελλάδα;

4. Do you believe that mainstream media in Greece are suffering from a credibility crisis?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

4α) Αν ναί, σε τι βαθμό; - If yes, to what extent?

1 2 3 4 5

(ελάχιστα) (πάρα πολύ)

(very little) (very much)

5. Πιστεύετε πως το διαδίκτυο θεωρείται πιο αξιόπιστο μέσο για την ενημέρωση από την πλειοψηφία του πληθυσμού της Ελλάδας;

5. In your opinion, do you believe that the Internet is considered to be a more credible source of news and information for the majority of people in Greece?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

6. Πιστεύετε πως το διαδίκτυο πλέον χρησιμοποιείται περισσότερο από τα συμβατικά μέσα ενημέρωσης για ειδήσεις, από την πλειοψηφία του πληθυσμού της Ελλάδας;

6. Do you believe that the Internet is now used more often than the mainstream media as a source of news and information by the majority of people in Greece?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

7. Ποιο πιστεύετε ότι είναι το ποσοστό των ειδήσεων που ο μέσος Έλληνας λαμβάνει από διαδικτυακές πηγές;

7. What percentage of news consumed by the average Greek citizen comes from online sources, in your opinion?

____

8. Πιστεύετε πως τα συμβατικά μέσα ενημέρωσης υποστηρίζουν κάποια συγκεκριμένα πολιτικά κόμματα;

8. Do you believe that the mainstream media in Greece is biased in favor of certain political parties?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

9. Πιστεύετε πως τα συμβατικά μέσα ενημέρωσης λειτουργούν εναντίον κάποιων συγκεκριμένων πολιτικών κομμάτων;

9. Do you believe that the mainstream media in Greece are biased against certain political parties?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

10. Ποια κόμματα πιστεύετε πως τα συμβατικά μέσα ενημέρωσης υποστηρίζουν αυτή τη στιγμή; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

10. Which political parties do you believe that the mainstream media are biased in favor of at this time? ***(select all that are applicable)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None

11. Ποια κόμματα πιστεύετε πως τα συμβατικά μέσα ενημέρωσης λειτουργούν εναντίων αυτή τη στιγμή; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None

11. Which political parties do you believe that the mainstream media are biased against at this time? ***(select all that are applicable)***

12. Ποια κόμματα πιστεύετε πως έχουν κερδίσει περισσότερο την υποστήριξη των χρηστών κοινωνικών δικτύων; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None

12. Which political party or parties do you believe enjoy the most support amongst the users of social media in Greece? ***(select all that are applicable)***

13. Πιστεύετε πως ο δημόσιος διάλογος που γίνεται στα κοινωνικά δίκτυα είναι κατά κάποιων συγκεκριμένων πολιτικών κομμάτων;

1) Ναι / Yes
2) Όχι / No
3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

13. Do you believe that the discourse which takes place on social media is biased against any particular political parties?

14. Ποια κόμματα πιστεύετε πως έχουν υποστεί τις μεγαλύτερες απώλειες στην υποστήριξη τους από κοινό, εξαιτίας των κοινωνικών δικτύων /νέων μέσων; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

14. Which political party or parties do you believe have seen the biggest decline in support as a result of the coverage it has received on the social/new media? ***(select all that are applicable)***

15. Πιστεύετε πως η σφαίρα των χρηστών του Facebook στην Ελλάδα υποστηρίζει περισσότερο κάποιο από τα ακόλουθα κόμματα; ***(επιλέξτε ένα)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ/ KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Όχι - Κανένα Κόμμα Δεν Υποστηρίζεται / No, there isn't a bias towards any party
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

15. Do you believe that Facebook users in Greece are biased towards any one particular political party out of the following? ***(select one)***

16. Πιστεύετε πως η σφαίρα των χρηστών του Twitter στην Ελλάδα υποστηρίζει περισσότερο κάποιο από τα ακόλουθα κόμματα; *(επιλέξτε ένα)*

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ/ KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Όχι - Κανένα Κόμμα Δεν Υποστηρίζεται / No, there isn't a bias towards any party
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

16. Do you believe that Twitter users in Greece are biased towards any one particular political party out of the following? *(select one)*

17. Ποια ηλικιακή ομάδα πιστεύετε πως χρησιμοποιεί περισσότερο το διαδίκτυο για ενημέρωση; *(επιλέξτε ένα)*

1) 18-24
2) 25-34
3) 35-44
4) 45-54
5) 55-64
6) 65+
7) Καμία διαφορά / No difference
8) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

17. Which age group do you believe is most reliant upon the internet and social media for news and information? *(select one)*

18. Ποια ηλικιακή ομάδα πιστεύετε πως χρησιμοποιεί περισσότερο τα συμβατικά μέσα ενημέρωσης για ειδήσεις; *(επιλέξτε ένα)*

1) 18-24
2) 25-34
3) 35-44
4) 45-54
5) 55-64
6) 65+
7) Καμία διαφορά / No difference
8) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

18. Which age group do you believe is most reliant upon mainstream media for news and information? *(select one)*

19. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την ποιότητα της παρουσίας των συμβατικών μέσων ενημέρωσης στο διαδίκτυο και στα κοινωνικά δίκτυα;

1 2 3 4 5
(χαμηλής ποιότητας) (υψηλής ποιότητας)
(low quality) (high quality)

19. How would you rate the overall quality of the online and social media presence of the mainstream media outlets in Greece?

20. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε το βαθμό στον οποίον τα συμβατικά μέσα ενημέρωσης στην Ελλάδα έχουν ενσωματώσει τα νέα και κοινωνικά μέσα στις προσπάθειες τους;

1 2 3 4 5
(χαμηλή ενσωμάτωση) (υψηλή ενσωμάτωση)
(not at all integrated) (very well integrated)

20. How would you rate the level of integration of new media tools by Greece's mainstream media outlets?

21. Πιστεύετε πως τα συμβατικά μέσα ενημέρωσης στην Ελλάδα έχουν αντιδράσει θετικά ή αρνητικά στην έλευση των κοινωνικών δικτύων και νέων μέσων;

21. Do you believe that Greece's mainstream media has, in general, reacted positively or negatively to the growth in popularity of social media and new media?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητικά) (πολύ θετικά)

(very negatively) (very positively)

22. Πιστεύετε η παρουσία των συμβατικών μέσων ενημέρωσης στα νέα μέσα και στα κοινωνικά δίκτυα έχει αυξήσει την αξιοπιστία τους σε σχέση με πριν;

22. Do you believe that the social and new media presence of Greece's mainstream media outlets has made those outlets more credible than they were previously?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

23. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την εξειδίκευση των Ελλήνων δημοσιογράφων στα συμβατικά μέσα ενημέρωσης με τις νέες τεχνολογίες και τα νέα μέσα;

23. How would you rank the overall fluency of journalism at Greece's mainstream media outlets, with new and social media tools?

1 2 3 4 5

(καθόλου καλή) (πολύ καλή)

(very poor) (excellent)

24. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επιρροή των νέων μέσων και των εργαλείων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην ποιότητα της δημοσιογραφίας στην Ελλάδα συνολικά;

24. Overall, how would you characterize the impact of social media on the quality of journalism in Greece, from all sources?

1 2 3 4 5

(καθόλου σημαντική) (πολύ σημαντική)

(not significant) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)

(very negative) (very positive)

25. Πιστεύετε πως τα συμβατικά μέσα ενημέρωσης στην Ελλάδα έχουν οδηγήσει το κοινό στην αναζήτηση εναλλακτικών πηγών ενημέρωσης στο διαδίκτυο;

25. Do you believe that the mainstream media in Greece, through the manner in which they cover and report the news, have led people to search for alternative sources of news and information on the Internet?

1 2 3 4 5

(διαφωνώ απόλυτα) (συμφωνώ απόλυτα)

(completely disagree) (completely agree)

26. Ονομάστε τα πρώτα τρία Ελληνικά διαδικτυακά μέσα ενημέρωσης που μπορείτε να σκεφτείτε (μέσα που λειτουργούν *μόνο* στο διαδίκτυο*)*.

26. Name three online-only Greek media outlets that first come to mind (*Only* list outlets which operate exclusively online).

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Ε. ΕΠΙΡΡΟΗ ΤΩΝ ΝΕΩΝ ΜΕΣΩΝ ΣΤΗΝ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗ- E. IMPACT OF SOCIAL AND NEW MEDIA ON POLITICS

1. Κατά την αντίληψη σας, οι Έλληνες πολιτικοί και τα πολιτικά κόμματα σε ποιό βαθμό έχουν ενσωματώσει τα εργαλεία κοινωνικής δικτύωσης, όπως το Facebook και το Twitter, στην καθημερινή τους δουλειά;

1 2 3 4 5

(καθόλου) (πάρα πολύ)

(not at all) (very much)

1. According to your own perception, to what extent have social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter been implemented and used by Greek politicians and political parties in their daily operations?

2. Κατατάξτε τα ακόλουθα εργαλεία κοινωνικής δικτύωσης ανάλογα με το πόσο συχνά πιστεύετε ότι χρησιμοποιούνται από πολιτικά πρόσωπα και τα πολιτικά κόμματα στην Ελλάδα ***(μόνο τα πρώτα τρία, με το 1 να είναι για το πιο δημοφιλή, το 2 για το 2ο πιο δημοφιλή, κλπ.)***

- Facebook (___)
- Twitter (___)
- Google+ (___)
- LinkedIn (___)
- Reddit (___)
- YouTube (___)
- Instagram (___)
- pinterest (___)
- blogs (___)

2. Order the following social media platforms according to how commonly you believe they are used by politicians in Greece ***(rank only from 1-3, with 1 being the most popular, 2 being second most popular, and 3 being third-most popular).***

3. Συνολικά, πιστεύετε πως η κυβέρνηση έχει αρνητική ή θετική αντίληψη προς το διαδίκτυο, τα νέα μέσα, και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)

(very negative) (very positive)

3. Overall, do you believe that the Greek government has a positive or a negative view of the internet, new media, and social media?

4. Συνολικά, πιστεύετε πως η κυβέρνηση έχει αρνητική ή θετική αντίληψη προς τους μπλόγκερς (bloggers);

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)

(very negative) (very positive)

4. Overall, do you believe that the Greek government has a positive or a negative view of bloggers?

5. Συνολικά, πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επιρροή των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην ποιότητα διακυβέρνησης στην Ελλάδα;

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)

(very negative) (very positive)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ ασύμαντη) (πολύ σημαντική)

(very insignificant) (very significant)

5. Overall, how would you rank the influence of new media and social media on the quality of governance in Greece?

6. Συνολικά, πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επιρροή των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης όσον αφορά την διαφάνεια στην διακυβέρνηση της Ελλάδας;

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

6. Overall, how would you rank the impact of new and social media on government transparency in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ ασύμαντη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(very insignificant) (very significant)

7. Συνολικά, πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επιρροή των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης όσον αφορά την διαφάνεια στα πολιτικά κόμματα της Ελλάδας;

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

7. Overall, how would you rank the impact of new and social media on the transparency of Greece's political parties?

8. Κατά πόσο πιστεύετε πως η ύπαρξη των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης επηρέασαν τα αποτελέσματα των βουλευτικών εκλογών του 2012;

1 2 3 4 5
(καμία επιρροή) (εξαιρετικά μεγάλη επιρροή)
(no influence) (extremely significant influence)

8. How would you evaluate the overall impact of new and social media in influencing the electoral results of the parliamentary elections of 2012?

9. Ποια πολιτικά κόμματα πιστεύετε ότι έχουν επωφεληθεί περισσότερο από τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

9. Which political party or parties do you believe have benefited the most from new media and social media? ***(select all that are applicable)***

10. Ποια πολιτικά κόμματα πιστεύετε ότι είχαν επωφεληθεί περισσότερο από τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης πριν από τις βουλευτικές εκλογές του Μαίου του 2012; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) ΠΑΣΟΚ / PASOK
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
7) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
8) Άλλο / Other: _____
9) Κανένα / None
10) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

10. Which political party or parties do you believe benefited the most from new media and social media prior to the parliamentary elections of May 2012? ***(select all that are applicable)***

11. Ποια πολιτικά κόμματα πιστεύετε ότι είχαν επωφεληθεί περισσότερο από τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης πριν από τις βουλευτικές εκλογές του Ιουνίου του 2012; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) ΠΑΣΟΚ / PASOK
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
7) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
8) Άλλο / Other: _____
9) Κανένα / None
10) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

11. Which political party or parties do you believe benefited the most from new media and social media prior to the parliamentary elections of June 2012? ***(select all that are applicable)***

12. Ποια πολιτικά κόμματα πιστεύετε ότι έχουν επωφεληθεί λιγότερο από τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) ΠΑΣΟΚ / PASOK
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

12. Which political party or parties do you believe have benefited the least from new media and social media? ***(select all that are applicable)***

13. Ποια πολιτικά κόμματα πιστεύετε ότι είχαν επωφεληθεί λιγότερο από τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης πριν από τις βουλευτικές εκλογές του Μαίου του 2012; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) ΠΑΣΟΚ / PASOK
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

13. Which political party or parties do you believe benefited the least from new media and social media prior to the parliamentary elections of May 2012? ***(select all that are applicable)***

14. Ποια πολιτικά κόμματα πιστεύετε ότι είχαν επωφεληθεί λιγότερο από τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης πριν από τις βουλευτικές εκλογές του Ιουνίου του 2012; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) ΠΑΣΟΚ / PASOK
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

14. Which political party or parties do you believe benefited the least from new media and social media prior to the parliamentary elections of June 2012? ***(select all that are applicable)***

15. Ποιο πολιτικό κόμμα πιστεύετε ότι κάνει την πιο αποτελεσματική χρήση των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης; ***(επιλέξτε ένα)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE

15. Which political party do you believe makes the most effective use of social and new media in its operations? ***(select one)***

6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

16. Ποιο κόμμα πιστεύετε ότι κάνει την πιο αναποτελεσματική χρήση των νέων μέσων και μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης; ***(επιλέξτε ένα)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE

16. Which political party do you believe makes the least effective use of social and new media in its operations? ***(select one)***

6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

17. Πιστεύετε πως τα αποτελέσματα των βουλευτικών εκλογών του 2012 θα ήταν διαφορετικά εάν δεν υπήρχαν τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;

1) Ναι / Yes
2) Μάλλον ναι / Probably yes

17. Do you believe that the outcome of the 2012 parliamentary elections would have been different had social & new media not existed?

3) Μάλλον όχι / Probably no
4) Όχι / No
5) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

18. Κατά την άποψη σας, πόσο αποτελεσματική ήταν η χρήση των εργαλείων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης από τους υποψήφιους στις βουλευτικές εκλογές του 2012;

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ ασήμαντη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(very ineffective) (very effective)

18. In your opinion, how effective was the usage of social media in the campaigns of candidates in the 2012 parliamentary elections?

19. Κατά την άποψη σας, πόσο αποτελεσματική ήταν η χρήση των εργαλείων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης από τους υποψήφιους και τα πολιτικά κόμματα στις φετινές Ευρωεκλογές στην Ελλάδα;

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ ασήμαντη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(very ineffective) (very effective)

19. In your opinion, how effective was the usage of social media tools by candidates and political parties participating in this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece?

20. Κατά την άποψη σας, πόσο αποτελεσματική ήταν η χρήση των εργαλείων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης από τους υποψήφιους και τα πολιτικά σχήματα στις φετινές εκλογές την τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης στην Ελλάδα;

20. In your opinion, how effective was the usage of social media tools by candidates and political parties participating in this year's local and municipal elections in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ ασήμαντη) (πολύ σημαντική)

(very ineffective) (very effective)

21. Κατά την άποψη σας, τα νέα μέσα και μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης έδωσαν φέτος την δυνατότητα στο κοινό να μάθει περισσότερες πληροφορίες, σε σχέση με το παρελθόν, για τους υποψηφίους στις εκλογές στην Ελλάδα;

21. In your opinion, have the internet. new media, and social media given the public the opportunity to find out more information about candidates in this year's elections in Greece, compared to the past?

1 2 3 4 5

(σίγουρα όχι) (σίγουρα ναι)

(not at all) (very much so)

22. Πως θα χαρακτηρίζατε την επίδραση των κοινωνικών δικτύων και των νέων μέσων στο επίπεδο του προεκλογικού διαλόγου που διατήρησαν οι υποψήφιοι στις φετινές εκλογές για το Ευρωπαϊκό κοινοβούλιο στην Ελλάδα;

22. How would you gauge the impact of new media and social media on the quality and level of campaigning for this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)

(very negative) (very positive)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ ασήμαντη) (πολύ σημαντική)

(very insignificant) (very significant)

23. Πως θα χαρακτηρίζατε την επίδραση των κοινωνικών δικτύων και των νέων μέσων στο επίπεδο του προεκλογικού διαλόγου που διατήρησαν οι υποψήφιοι στις φετινές εκλογές για την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση στην Ελλάδα;

23. How would you gauge the impact of new media and social media on the quality and level of campaigning for this year's local and municipal elections in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)

(very negative) (very positive)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ ασήμαντη) (πολύ σημαντική)

(very insignificant) (very significant)

24. Πως θα χαρακτηρίζατε την επίδραση των κοινωνικών δικτύων και νέων μέσων στην διαφάνεια των κομμάτων και των υποψηφίων στις φετινές εκλογές για το Ευρωπαϊκό κοινοβούλιο στην Ελλάδα;

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ ασήμαντη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(very insignificant) (very significant)

24. How would you gauge the impact of new media and social media on the transparency maintained by the political parties and candidates participating in this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece?

25. Πως θα χαρακτηρίζατε την επίδραση των κοινωνικών δικτύων και νέων μέσων στην διαφάνεια των κομμάτων και υποψηφίων στις φετινές εκλογές για την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση;

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ ασήμαντη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(very insignificant) (very significant)

25. How would you gauge the impact of new and social media on the transparency of the political parties and candidates participating in this year's local/municipal elections in Greece?

26. Ποια πολιτικά κόμματα πιστεύετε ότι βοηθηθήκαν περισσότερο από τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στις φετινές Ευρωεκλογές; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

26. Which political party or parties do you believe benefited the most from new and social media in this year's European parliamentary elections? ***(select all that are applicable)***

27. Ποια πολιτικά κόμματα πιστεύετε βοηθηθήκαν περισσότερο από τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στις φετινές εκλογές για την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

27. Which political party or parties do you believe benefited the most from new and social media in this year's local and municipal elections in Greece? ***(select all that are applicable)***

28. Ποιο πολιτικό κόμμα πιστεύετε ότι είχε το μεγαλύτερο όφελος από τα κοινωνικά δίκτυα και τα νέα μέσα στις φετινές εκλογές για το Ευρωπαϊκό κοινοβούλιο; ***(επιλέξτε ένα)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE

28. Which political party do you believe was helped the most by social and new media in this year's European parliamentary elections? ***(select one)***

6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

29. Ποιο πολιτικό κόμμα πιστεύετε ότι ζημιώθηκε περισσότερο από τα κοινωνικά δίκτυα και τα νέα μέσα στις φετινές εκλογές για το Ευρωπαϊκό κοινοβούλιο; ***(επιλέξτε ένα)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE

29. Which political party do you believe was hurt the most by social and new media in this year's European parliamentary elections? ***(select one)***

6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

30. Ποιο πολιτικό κόμμα πιστεύετε ότι ζημιώθηκε περισσότερο από τα κοινωνικά δίκτυα και τα νέα μέσα στις φετινές εκλογές για την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση; ***(επιλέξτε ένα)***

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) Ελιά (ΠΑΣΟΚ) / Elia (PASOK)
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE

30. Which political party do you believe was hurt the most by social and new media in this year's local and municipal elections in Greece? ***(select one)***

6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

31. Πιστεύετε πως τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης και τα νέα μέσα επέδρασαν στο τελικό αποτέλεσμα των φετινών εκλογών για το Ευρωπαϊκό κοινοβούλιο;

1) Ναι / Yes
2) Μάλλον ναι / Probably yes

31. Do you believe that social media and new media impacted the final outcome of this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece?

3) Μάλλον όχι / Probably no
4) Όχι / No
5) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

32. Πιστεύετε πως τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης και τα νέα μέσα επέδρασαν το τελικό αποτέλεσμα των φετινών εκλογών για την τοπική αυτοδιοίκηση;

1) Ναι / Yes
2) Μάλλον ναι / Probably yes

32. Do you believe that social media and new media impacted the final outcome of this year's local and municipal elections in Greece?

3) Μάλλον όχι / Probably no
4) Όχι / No
5) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

33. Πιστεύετε πως έγινε περισσότερη χρήση των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης από τους υποψηφίους όλων των φετινών εκλογικών αναμετρήσεων σε σχέση με τις εκλογές του 2012;

33. Do you believe that the usage of new and social media tools by this year's candidates for all electoral contests increased compared to the level of usage prior to the 2012 parliamentary elections?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

Ζ. ΕΠΙΡΡΟΗ ΤΩΝ ΝΕΩΝ ΜΕΣΩΝ ΣΤΗΝ ΔΗΜΟΣΙΑ ΣΦΑΙΡΑ - F. IMPACT OF SOCIAL AND NEW MEDIA ON THE PUBLIC SPHERE

1. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε το επίπεδο της επίδρασης των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην δημόσια σφαίρα στην Ελλάδα;

1. How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media to the public sphere in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5

(καμία επιρροή) (εξαιρετικά μεγάλη επιρροή)
(no influence) (extremely significant influence)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

2. Πιστεύετε πως τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης και τα νέα μέσα έχουν συμβάλλει θετικά ή αρνητικά στην δημόσια σφαίρα στην Ελλάδα;

2. Do you believe that new media and social media have made a positive or a negative contribution to the public sphere in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

3. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση των παραδοσιακών μέσων ενημέρωσης στην Ελληνική δημόσια σφαίρα σε ιστορικό επίπεδο (εποχή της μεταπολίτευσης);

3. How would you gauge the contribution of mainstream media to the public sphere in Greece historically (in the post-junta period)?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

4. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση των παραδοσιακών μέσων ενημέρωσης στην Ελληνική δημόσια σφαίρα σήμερα;

4. How would you gauge the contribution of mainstream media to the public sphere in Greece today?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

1 2 3 4 5

(καμία επιρροή) (εξαιρετικά μεγάλη επιρροή)
(no influence) (extremely significant influence)

5. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την ποιότητα και το επίπεδο ανάπτυξης του δημοσίου διαλόγου στην Ελλάδα στην εποχή της μεταπολίτευσης;

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ φτωχό) (πολύ ανεπτυγμένο)
(very poor) (very well-developed)

5. How would you gauge the level of development of public dialogue and discourse in Greece in the post-junta era?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ φτωχό) (πολύ ανεπτυγμένο)
(very poor) (very well-developed)

6. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε το επίπεδο του δημοσίου διαλόγου στην Ελλάδα σήμερα;

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ φτωχό) (πολύ ανεπτυγμένο)
(very poor) (very well-developed)

6. How would you gauge the quality and level of public dialogue/discourse in Greece today?

7. Αξιολογήστε τα ακόλουτα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης σύμφωνα με την δημοτικότητα τους στην Ελλάδα, όπως την αντιλαμβάνεται *(αξιολογήστε μόνο τα πρώτα 5).*

__ Facebook
__ Twitter
__ YouTube
__ LinkedIn
__ Google+
__ pinterest

7. Rank the following social media outlets according to their popularity in Greece, based on your own perception *(rank the top 5 only).*

__ Reddit
__ Instagram
__ Blogs
__ Άλλο / Other: _____
__ Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

8. Ποιο μέσο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης πιστεύετε ότι είναι το ποιο δημοφιλή για την συζήτηση πολιτικών θεμάτων σήμερα στην Ελλάδα;

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+

8. Which social media outlet do you believe is the most popular in Greece for the purposes of discussing political issues at the present time?

6) pinterest
7) Reddit
8) Instagram
9) Blogs
10) Άλλο / Other: _____
11) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

9. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην διάδοση των ακόλουθων θεμάτων στο ευρύ κοινό;

9. How would you gauge the impact of social media and new media in exposing the following issues to the public?

	(καμία επιρροή) (no impact)				(πολύ μεγάλη επιρροή) (very significant impact)
1) Δολοφονία Α. Γρηγορόπουλου / Killing of A. Grigoropoulos	1	2	3	4	5
2) Κίνημα των αγανακτισμένων / Indignants' protest movement	1	2	3	4	5
3) Arrest of blogger Geron Pastitsios / Σύλληψη του Γέρον Παστίτσιου	1	2	3	4	5
4) Arrest of journalist Kostas Vaxevanis / Σύλληψη του δημοσιογράφου Κώστα Βαξεβάνη	1	2	3	4	5
5) Διαμαρτυρία για την λειτουργία των ορυχίων στις Σκουριές / Skouries mining controversy	1	2	3	4	5
6) Μανωλάδα / Manolada controversy	1	2	3	4	5
7) Κλείσιμο ΕΡΤ / Shutdown of ERT	1	2	3	4	5
8) Δολοφονία Παύλου Φύσσα / Murder of Pavlos Fyssas	1	2	3	4	5
9) Συλλήψεις Χρυσής Αυγής / Golden Dawn arrests	1	2	3	4	5

10. Πιστεύετε πως η κάλυψη των ακόλουθων γεγονότων από τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης ήταν ποιο αξιόπιστη και επαρκή σε σχέση με την κάλυψη από τα παραδοσιακά μέσα ενημέρωσης;

10. In your opinion, was the coverage provided by social and new media for each of the following issues more thorough and credible compared to the coverage provided by the mainstream media?

1) Δολοφονία Γρηγορόπουλου / Killing of Grigoropoulos	a) Ναι / Yes	b) Όχι / No	c) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know
2) Κίνημα των αγανακτισμένων / Indignants' protest movement	a) Ναι / Yes	b) Όχι / No	c) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know
3) Σύλληψη του Γέρον Παστίτσιου / Arrest of blogger Geron Pastitsios	a) Ναι / Yes	b) Όχι / No	c) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know
4) Σύλληψη του δημοσιογράφου Κώστα Βαξεβάνη / Arrest of journalist Kostas Vaxevanis	a) Ναι / Yes	b) Όχι / No	c) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know
5) Διαμαρτυρία για την λειτουργία των ορυχίων στις Σκουριές / Skouries gold mining controversy	a) Ναι / Yes	b) Όχι / No	c) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know
6) Μανωλάδα / Manolada	a) Ναι / Yes	b) Όχι / No	c) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know
7) Κλείσιμο ΕΡΤ / Shutdown of ERT	a) Ναι / Yes	b) Όχι / No	c) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know
8) Δολοφονία Παύλου Φύσσα / Murder of Pavlos Fyssas	a) Ναι / Yes	b) Όχι / No	c) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know
9) Συλλήψεις Χρυσής Αυγής / Golden Dawn arrests	a) Ναι / Yes	b) Όχι / No	c) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

11. Κατά την άποψη σας, κατά πόσο έχουν επιδράσει τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης τα κινήματα διαμαρτυρίας τα τελευταία χρόνια στην Ελλάδα;

11. How would you gauge the impact of social media and new media in inspiring protest movements in Greece in recent years?

1 2 3 4 5

(καμία επιρροή) (εξαιρετικά μεγάλη επιρροή)
(no influence) (extremely significant influence)

12. Κατά την άποψη σας, κατά πόσο είχαν συμβάλλει τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην δημιουργία του κινήματος των αγανακτισμένων το 2011;

12. In your opinion, what was the impact of social media and new media in inspiring the Syntagma Square indignants' protest movement in 2011?

1 2 3 4 5

(καμία επιρροή) (εξαιρετικά μεγάλη επιρροή)
(no influence) (extremely significant influence)

13. Πιστεύετε πως θα μπορούσε να οργανωθεί το κίνημα των αγανακτισμένων χωρίς την συμβολή των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;

13. Do you believe that a movement such as the protest of the indignants in Syntagma Square would have been possible without the usage of new media and social media?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

μάλλον ναι, μάλλον όχι

Η. Η ΜΠΛΟΓΚΟΣΦΑΙΡΑ - G. THE BLOGOSPHERE

1. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την αξιοπιστία ή μη των blogs ως πηγή έγκυρης ενημέρωσης;

1. Do you believe that, generally, blogs are a credible source of news and information?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(not at all credible) (very credible)

2. Πιστεύετε πως τα μπλογκ έχουν συμβάλλει στην μείωση της απήχησης των παραδοσιακών μέσων ενημέρωσης στην Ελλάδα;

2. Do you believe that blogs have contributed to a decline in popularity of mainstream media in Greece?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

μάλλον ναι/όχι

3. Πιστεύετε πως τα μπλογκ έχουν επηρεάσει θετικά ή αρνητικά το επίπεδο ενημέρωσης του κοινού στην Ελλάδα;

3. Do you believe that blogs have made a positive or negative impact on the quality of news and information received by the Greek public?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

4. Πιστεύετε πως πρέπει να διατηρηθεί το δικαίωμα ανωνυμίας των μπλογκ και των δημοσιεύσεων στο διαδίκτυο;

4. Do you support the continuation of anonymous blogs and postings on the Internet?

1 2 3 4 5

(σε καμία περίπτωση) (under no circumstances)

(σε κάθε περίπτωση) (always, under all circumstances)

5. Πιστεύετε πως πρέπει να απαγορευθεί δια νόμου η ανωνυμία στα μπλογκ και στις ενημερωτικές ιστοσελίδες στο διαδίκτυο;

1) Ναι / Yes
2) Όχι / No

5. Do you believe that the publication of anonymous blogs or news articles on the Internet should be outlawed?

3) Μόνο υπό προυποθέσεις / only under certain circumstances

6. Πιστεύετε πως η ανωνυμία μειώνει την αξιοπιστία κάποιου μπλογκ ή κάποιας δημοσίευσης στο διαδίκτυο;

6. Do you believe that anonymity diminishes the trustworthiness of a blog or news article on the Internet?

1 2 3 4 5

(καθόλου) (not at all)

(πάρα πολύ) (very much)

7. Πιστεύετε ότι, στο σύνολο τους, τα μπλογκ και οι ενημερωτικές ιστοσελίδες λειτουργούν ανεξάρτητα από πολιτικά και κυβερνητικά συμφέροντα;

7. As a whole, do you believe that blogs and new media outlets, in your view, truly independent of the government and of existing power structures in the country?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

8. Θα χαρακτηρίζατε τα μπλογκ, στο σύνολο τους, ως παράδειγμα δημοσιογραφίας των πολιτών;

8. Would you consider news blogs in Greece representative examples of "citizen journalism"?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Μάλλον ναι / Probably yes 3) Μάλλον όχι / Probably no 4) Όχι / No

9. Σε ποιο βαθμό πιστεύετε ότι τα μπλογκ έχουν προωθήσει και έχουν συμβάλλει στην ανάδειξη της δημοσιογραφίας των πολιτών στην Ελλάδα;

9. To what extent do you believe blogs have promoted and encouraged "citizen journalism" in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5

(καθόλου) (not at all)

(πάρα πολύ) (very much)

10. Πόσα ενημερωτικά blog διαβάζεται σε τακτική βάση (τουλάχιστον μία φορά την εβδομάδα);

10. How many news blogs do you read regularly (at least once per week)?

_____

11. Ονομάστε μέχρι τρια ενημερωτικά blog που παρακολουθείτε.

11. Name up to three (3) news blogs which you read regularly.

1) _____
2) _____
3) _____

Θ. ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΑ ΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ - H. CIVIL SOCIETY

1. Κατά την άποψη σας, η κοινωνία πολιτών πόσο είχε αναπτυχθεί στην εποχή της μεταπολίτευσης στην Ελλάδα;

1. In your opinion, how well-developed was the civil society sphere in Greece in the post-junta period?

1 2 3 4 5

(καθόλου ανεπτυγμένη) (πολύ ανεπτυγμένη)

(not at all developed) (extremely well developed)

2. Κατά την άποψη σας, η κοινωνία πολιτών έχει αναπτυχθεί επαρκώς στην Ελλάδα σήμερα;

2. In your opinion, is the civil society sphere in Greece well-developed today?

1 2 3 4 5

(καθόλου ανεπτυγμένη) (πολύ ανεπτυγμένη)

(not at all developed) (extremely well developed)

3. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην ανάπτυξη της κοινωνίας πολιτών στην Ελλάδα;

3. How would you gauge the impact of social and new media tools in fostering the growth or development of civil society initiatives in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5

(καμία επιρροή) (εξαιρετικά μεγάλη επιρροή)

(no influence) (extremely significant influence)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)

(very negative) (very positive)

Ι. ΕΡΩΤΗΣΕΙΣ ΓΙΑ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΟΥΣ ΣΥΝΤΑΚΤΕΣ (ΔΗΜΟΣΙΟΓΡΑΦΟΥΣ) - I. QUESTIONS FOR NEWSPAPER EDITORS (JOURNALISTS)

1. Η εφημερίδα σας χρησιμοποιεί τα ακόλουθα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης και νέα μέσα;

1. Does your newspaper utilize the following social and new media tools?

1) Facebook a) Ναι / Yes b) Όχι / No

2) Twitter a) Ναι / Yes b) Όχι / No

3) Google+ a) Ναι / Yes b) Όχι / No

4) LinkedIn a) Ναι / Yes b) Όχι / No

5) pinterest a) Ναι / Yes b) Όχι / No

6) Instagram a) Ναι / Yes b) Όχι / No

7) Reddit a) Ναι / Yes b) Όχι / No

8) Μπλογκ / Bloga) Ναι / Yes b) Όχι / No

9) Podcast a) Ναι / Yes b) Όχι / No

10) Video a) Ναι / Yes b) Όχι / No

11) Σχόλια / Comments a) Ναι / Yes b) Όχι / No

12) RSS feed a) Ναι / Yes b) Όχι / No

2. Ποιο μέσο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης χρησιμοποιεί η εφημερίδα σας περισσότερο;

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Reddit
6) Google+
7) pinterest
8) Instagram
9) Μπλογκ - Blog

2. Which social media outlet is most used by your newspaper?

3. Ποια μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης χρησιμοποιείτε στα πλαίσια της επαγγελματικής/δημοσιογραφικής σας απασχόλησης; *(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)*

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Reddit
6) Google+
7) pinterest
8) Instagram
9) Μπλογκ - Blog

3. Which social media outlets do you use as part of your professional work as a journalist? *(select all that are applicable)*

4. Ποιο μέσο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης χρησιμοποιείτε περισσότερο, στα πλαίσια της επαγγελματικής/δημοσιογραφικής σας απασχόλησης;

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Reddit
6) Google+
7) pinterest
8) Instagram
9) Μπλογκ - Blog

4. Which social media outlet do you use the most as part of your professional work as a journalist?

5. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην ποιότητα της δημοσιογραφίας της εφημερίδας σας;

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

1 2 3 4 5
(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existent) (very significant)

5. How would you gauge the impact of social media and new media on the quality of your newspaper's journalism?

6. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην δυνατότητα να εξασκήσετε το επάγγελμα σας σαν δημοσιογράφος;

6. How would you gauge the impact of social media and new media on your ability to perform your job as a journalist?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

1 2 3 4 5

(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existent) (very significant)

7. Η εφημερίδα στην οποία εργάζεστε σας υποχρεώνει να διατηρείτε παρουσία στα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;

7. Does your newspaper require you to maintain a social media presence as a journalist?

1) Ναι / Yes
2) Όχι / No

8. Έχετε επικοινωνία με το κοινό μέσω των κοινωνικών δικτύων, στα πλαίσια της δημοσιογραφικής σας ιδιότητας;

8. Do you interact with the public/with your readers via social media, as part of your journalistic capacity?

1) Ναι / Yes
2) Όχι / No

9. Πιστεύετε πως η εφημερίδα στην οποία εργάζεστε αντιμετωπίζει κρίση εμπιστοσύνης από το κοινό;

9. Do you believe that the newspaper where you are employed is experiencing a credibility crisis?

1) Ναι / Yes
2) Όχι / No

10. Ποια διαδικτυακά εργαλεία χρησιμοποιούνται από την εφημερίδα σας;

10. Which Internet tools are used by the newspaper where you are employed?

1) Διαδικτυακό ραδιόφωνο / Internet Radio
2) .pdf έκδοση της εφημερίδας / .pdf online issue
3) Διαδικτυακό βίντεο / Online Video
4) Αποκλειστικό υλικό / Exclusive online content
5) Online newsletter
6) Άλλο / Other: _____
7) Κανένα / None of the above

11. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση της εφημερίδας σας στην δημόσια σφαίρα και στον δημόσιο διάλογο της χώρας;

11. How would you gauge your newspaper's impact on the Greek public sphere and on public discourse in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5

(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existant) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

12. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση της διαδικτυακής παρουσίας της εφημερίδας σας στην δημόσια σφαίρα και στον δημόσιο διάλογο της χώρας;

12. How would you gauge the impact of the online presence of your newspaper on the Greek public sphere and on public discourse in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5

(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existent) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

13. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την συνολική ποιότητα της παρουσίας της εφημερίδας σας στο διαδίκτυο και στα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;

13. How would you rate the overall quality of your newspaper's online and social media presence?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ κακή) (πολύ καλή)
(very poor) (very good)

14. Η εφημερίδα σας διατηρεί ξεχωριστό προσωπικό για την παρουσία σας στο διαδίκτυο και στα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;

14. Does your newspaper maintain a dedicated staff exclusively for its online and social media presence?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No

15. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση της διαδικτυακής παρουσίας της εφημερίδας σας στα πολιτικά δρώμενα και στον πολιτικό διάλογο της Ελλάδας;

15. How would you gauge the impact of the online presence of your newspaper on the poltical sphere and political discourse in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5

(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existant) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

16. Πως θα χαρακτηρίζατε την απήχηση που έχει η διαδικτυακή παρουσία της εφημερίδας σας, στο ευρύ κοινό;

16. How would you gauge the reach and popularity of your newspaper's online and social media presence, amongst the public?

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ μικρή) (πολύ μεγάλη)
(extremely limited) (very widespread)

17. Η αυτο-λογοκρισία των επαγγελματιών δημοσιογράφων αποτελεί πρόβλημα στην Ελληνική δημοσιογραφία σήμερα, κατά την άποψη σας;

17. In your opinion, is self-censorship on the part of professional journalists common in Greek journalism today?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) I don't know μάλλον ναι/οχι

18. Κατά την άποψη σας, με ποίο τρόπο έχουν επιδράσει τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης την αυτο-λογοκρισία των επαγγελματιών δημοσιογράφων στην Ελλάδα;

18. In your opinion, how have social and new media contributed to self-censorship on the part of professional journalists in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5
(καθόλου) (πάρα πολύ)
(not at all significantly) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητικά) (πολύ θετικά)
(very negatively) (very positively)

19. Θεωρείτε ότι τα κοινωνικά δίκτυα και τα νέα μέσα είναι σημαντικός παράγοντας στην αναδημοσίευση και προώθηση των άρθρων της εφημερίδας σας;

19. Do you consider social and new media an important means of generating visitors and readers to your newspaper?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No

20. Κατά την αντίληψη σας, ποιο ποσοστό των επισκεπτών της ιστοσελίδας της εφημερίδας σας προέρχεται από συνδέσμους των άρθρων σας που έχουν αναρτηθεί στα κοινωνικά δίκτυα;

20. In your estimation, what percentage of pageviews for your newspaper's website originate from links posted on social media?

_____

21. Πόσο σημαντική υπολογίζετε πως θα είναι η συμβολή των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην λειτουργία της δημοσιογραφίας στην Ελλάδα τα επόμενα χρόνια;

21. How significant do you anticipate the role of new media and social media will be in the journalistic realm in Greece in the next few years?

1 2 3 4 5
(καθόλου) (πάρα πολύ)
(not significant) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητικά) (πολύ θετικά)
(very negatively) (very positively)

Κ. ΕΡΩΤΗΣΕΙΣ ΓΙΑ ΒΟΥΛΕΥΤΕΣ/ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΑ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ - J. QUESTIONS FOR MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT/POLITICIANS

1. Σε ποιο κόμμα ανήκετε;

1. Which party do you belong to/represent?

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) ΠΑΣΟΚ / PASOK
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα (ανεξάρτητος/η)/None (independent)
11) Δεν ήμουν υποψήφιος/α στο παρελθόν / I was not a candidate in any previous election

2. Ήσασταν στο παρελθόν υποψήφιος/α... ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

2. Were you previously a candidate in: ***(select all that are applicable)***

1) Εκλογές Ευρωπαϊκού κοινοβουλίου / European parliamentary elections
2) Εκλογές τοπικής αυτοδιοίκησης / Local or municipal elections
3) Βουλευτικές εκλογές του 2012 / 2012 parliamentary elections
4) Προηγούμενες βουλευτικές εκλογές (πριν το 2012) / Previous parliamentary elections (pre-2012)
5) Άλλη θέση / other position: _____
6) Δεν ήμουν ποτέ ξανά υποψήφιος πριν τις φετινές εκλογές / I was never a candidate prior to this year's elections

3. Στην προηγούμενη εκλογική αναμέτρηση στην οποία πήρατε μέρος, με ποιο κόμμα ήσασταν υποψήφιος/α;

3. Which party were you a member of in your previous electoral campaign?

1) Νέα Δημοκρατία / New Democracy
2) ΣΥΡΙΖΑ / Syriza
3) ΠΑΣΟΚ / PASOK
4) Ανεξάρτητοι Έλληνες / Independent Greeks
5) ΚΚΕ / KKE
6) Το Ποτάμι / To Potami
7) ΔΗΜΑΡ / DIMAR
8) Χρυσή Αυγή / Golden Dawn
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα (ανεξάρτητος/η)/None (independent)
11) Δεν ήμουν υποψήφιος/α στο παρελθόν / I was not a candidate in any previous election

4. Έχετε λογαριασμό σε κάποιο μέσο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης με την πολιτική/ βουλευτική σας ιδιότητα;

4. Do you maintain an official social media account (or accounts) as part of your position as a member of the European parliament?

1) Ναι / Yes
2) Όχι / No

5. Σε ποια μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης διατηρείτε λογαριασμό με την πολιτική/ βουλευτική σας ιδιότητα;

5. On which social media outlets do you maintain an official account, as part of your position as a member of European parliament?

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+
6) Reddit
7) pinterest
8) Instagram
9) Μπλογκ - Blogs
10) Άλλο / Other: _____
11) Κανένα / None

6. Χρησιμοποιήσατε κάποιο μέσο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην φετινή προεκλογική σας εκστρατεία;

6. Did you use one or more social media outlets as part of your electoral campaign this year?

1) Ναι / Yes
2) Όχι / No

7. Ποια μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης χρησιμοποιήσατε στην προεκλογική σας εκστρατεία στις φετινές εκλογές; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

7. Which social media outlets did you use as part of your electoral campaign, in this year's elections? ***(select all that apply)***

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+
6) Reddit
7) pinterest
8) Instagram
9) Μπλογκ - Blogs
10) Άλλο / Other: _____
11) Κανένα / None

8. Ποιο μέσο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης χρησιμοποιήσατε περισσότερο στην προεκλογική σας εκστρατεία στις φετινές εκλογές;

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+
6) Reddit
7) pinterest
8) Instagram
9) Μπλογκ - Blogs
10) Άλλο / Other: _____
11) Κανένα / None

8. Which social media outlet did you use the most as part of your electoral campaign for this year's elections?

9. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση της παρουσίας σας στα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην φετινή προεκλογική σας εκστρατεία;

1 2 3 4 5
(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existent) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

9. How would you gauge the impact of your social media presence during your electoral campaign this year?

10. Ποιο μέσο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης χρησιμοποιείτε περισσότερο σήμερα, στην πολιτική σας ιδιότητα;

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+
6) pinterest
7) Instagram
8) Blogs
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None

10. Which social media outlet do you use the most today, as part of your position as a member of the European parliament?

11. Πως θα χαρακτηρίζατε την συμβολή των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην δουλειά σας σαν Ευρωβουλευτής;

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

1 2 3 4 5
(καθόλου) (πάρα πολύ)
(not at all significant) (very significant)

11. How would you gauge the impact of social media on your work as a member of the European parliament?

12. Γράφετε/κάνετε αναρτήσεις εσύ στους επίσημους λογαριασμούς σας στα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης, ή έχετε κάποιο άλλο άτομο που χειρίζεται τους λογαριασμούς σας;

12. Do you use and post on your official social media accounts personally, or do you utilize an adviser or other staffer for such purposes?

1) Χειρίζομαι μόνος/μόνη μου τους λογαριασμούς μου / I maintain exclusive control over my accounts

2) Άλλο άτομο χειρίζεται τους λογαριασμούς μου αποκλειστικά / Another adviser or staffer maintains exclusive control over my accounts

3) Και τα δύο / Both

4) Not applicable

13. Έχετε άμεση επαφή με τους ψηφοφόρους σας και το ευρύ κοινό μέσω των λογαριασμών σας στα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;

13. Do you maintain interaction with your voters and the general public via your social media accounts?

1) Ναι / Yes

2) Όχι / No

3) Δεν με αφορά / Not applicable

14. Τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης έχουν βοηθήσει στην επικοινωνία και επαφή σας με τους ψηφοφόρους και το ευρύ κοινό;

14. Have social media tools aided you in your ability to communicate with your constituents and the general public?

1) Ναι / Yes

2) Όχι / No

3) Δεν με αφορά / Not applicable

15. Θεωρείτε πως το trolling είναι σοβαρό πρόβλημα που πλήττει τον πολιτικό διάλογο που διεξάγεται μέσω διαδικτύου στην Ελλάδα;

15. Do you believe that trolling is a problem which significantly impacts the quality of online political discourse in Greece?

1) Ναι / Yes

2) Όχι / No

3) Δεν γνωρίζω / Not sure

16. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση και την έκταση του φαινομένου του trolling στο Ελληνικό διαδίκτυο, όσον αφορά τον πολιτικό διάλογο;

16. How would you gauge the impact and prevalence of trolling with regards to the political dialogue which takes place on the internet in Greece?

1 2 3 4 5

(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existent) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

17. Το κόμμα σας διατηρεί επίσημη παρουσία στα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;

17. Does your political party maintain an official social media presence?

1) Ναι / Yes

2) Όχι / No

18. Σε ποια μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης διατηρεί επίσημη παρουσία το κόμμα σας; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+
6) pinterest
7) Instagram
8) Blogs
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None

18. On which social media platforms does your political party maintain an official presence?

19. Ποιο μέσο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης χρησιμοποιείται περισσότερο από το κόμμα σας;

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+
6) pinterest
7) Instagram
8) Blogs
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None

19. Which social media platform is used the most by your political party?

20. Ενσωμάτωσε το κόμμα σας τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στις προεκλογικές του προσπάθειες φέτος;

1) Ναι / Yes
2) Όχι / No

20. Did your political party use social media as part of its pre-election campaigning this year?

21. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στο εκλογικό αποτέλεσμα του κόμματος σας στις δύο βουλευτικές εκλογικές αναμετρήσεις του 2012;

1 2 3 4 5
(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existent) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

21. How would you characterize the impact of social media on your party's electoral performance in the two parliamentary elections of 2012?

22. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την επίδραση των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στα αποτελέσματα των φετινών εκλογών για το Ευρωπαϊκό κοινοβούλιο στην Ελλάδα;

1 2 3 4 5
(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existent) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

22. How would you characterize the impact of the social media on this year's European parliamentary elections in Greece?

23. Ποια μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης χρησιμοποιήσε το κόμμα σας στα πλαίσια της προεκλογικής σας εκστρατείας για τις φετινές Ευρωπαϊκές εκλογές; ***(επιλέξτε όλα όσα ισχύουν)***

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+
6) pinterest
7) Instagram
8) Blogs
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None

24. Ποιο μέσο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης χρησιμοποιήσε περισσότερο το κόμμα σας στα πλαίσια της προεκλογικής σας εκστρατείας για τις φετινές Ευρωπαϊκές εκλογές;

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+
6) pinterest
7) Instagram
8) Blogs
9) Άλλο / Other: _____
10) Κανένα / None

25. Πόσες ώρες την ημέρα αφιερώνετε στην διαδικτυακή σας παρουσία και στην παρουσία σας στα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης, κατά μέσο όρο;

1) Δεν αφιερώνω χρόνο / None
2) 0-1 ώρες / 0-1 hours
3) 1-2 ώρες / 1-2 hours
4) 2-4 ώρες / 2-4 hours
5) Περισσότερες από 4 ώρες / More than 4 hours

23. Which social media tools were used by your political party as part of its campaign efforts for this year's European parliamentary elections? ***(select all that are applicable)***

24. Which social media tool was used the most by your political party as part of its campaign efforts for this year's European parliamentary elections?

25. How many hours per day, on average, do you dedicate for the maintenance of your online presence and your social media accounts?

26. Με ποίους τρόπους χρησιμοποιείται τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης για την επικοινωνία σας με τους ψηφοφόρους και το ευρύ κοινό;

26. In which way(s) do you use social and new media tools to communicate with your constituents and with the public at large?

1) Δημοσίευση newsletter / Publication of newsletter
2) Επικοινωνία με άλλους βουλευτές / Communication with other members of parliament
3) Επικοινωνία με άλλα μέλη του κόμματος σας / Communication with other members of your party
communication with other politicians in Greece
4) Επικοινωνία με στελέχη της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης / Communication with European Union officials
5) Επικοινωνία με πολιτικά πρόσωπα άλλων χωρών / Communication with other international officials
6) Δημοσίευση δελτίων τύπου / Posting press releases
7) Επαφή με ψηφοφόρους / Answering constituent messages
8) Απαντώντας σε σχόλια στους λογαριασμούς κοινωνικής δικτώσης / Replying to comments or tweets on social media
9) Σχολιασμό της πολιτικής επικαιρότητας / Political commentary
10) Δημοσίευση ειδήσεων που αφορούν το πολιτκό σας έργο / Publicizing news about you and your political activity
11) Δημοσίευση άρθρων που έχετε συντάξει / Publicizing articles you've written
12) Αναδημοσίευση άρθρων/ συνδέσμων από άλλες ιστοσελίδες / Reposting articles/websites from other sources
13) Επικοινωνία με δημοσιογράφους / Communication with journalists
14) Προεκλογική εκστρατεία και προσέλκυση ψηφοφόρων / Campaigning and attracting new voters
15) Αναδημοσίευση ειδήσεων για το κόμμα σας / Reposting news about your political party
16) Δημοσίευση οπτικοακουστικού υλικού / Posting multimedia: photos, video, audio, podcasts, etc.
17) Παρακολούθηση λογαριασμών άλλων πολιτικών προσώπων / Following other politicians
18) Παρακολούθηση λογαριασμών άλλων πολιτικών κομμάτων / Following other political parties
19) Παρακολούθηση λογαριασμών μέσων ενημέρωσης ή δημοσιογράφων / Following journalists and media outlets
20) Δημοσίευση υλικού που αφορούν δικές σας μη-πολιτικές δραστηριότητες / Posting non-political content about yourself
21) Άλλο / Other: _____
22) Κανένα από τα παραπάνω / None of the above

27. Το κόμμα σας έχει κάποιος επίσημους κανονισμούς που αφορούν την συμπεριφορά των βουλευτών και στελεχών τους στο διαδίκτυο και στα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;

27. Does your political party maintain an official policy for how its members of parliament and other officials can conduct themselves on the Internet and on social media accounts?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No

28. Θα θέσετε υποψηφιότηταστια στις επόμενες εκλογές για το Ευρωπαϊκό κοινοβούλιο;

28. Will you be a candidate in the next European parliamentary elections?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

29. Σκοπεύετε να θέσετε υποψηφιότητα στις επόμενες βουλευτικές εκλογές;

29. Do you plan to run as a candidate in the next national parliamentary elections?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No 3) I don't know

30. Σκοπεύετε να κάνετε περισσότερη χρήση των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην επόμενη προεκλογική σας εκστρατεία;
1) Ναι / Yes

30. Do you plan to increase your usage of new media and social media tools in the next electoral contest that you will participate in?
2) Όχι / No 3) I don't know

31. Η επαφή που έχετε με τους ψηφοφόρους σας και το ευρύ κοινό μέσω διαδικτύου επηρεάζει τις πολιτικές σας θέσεις ή το πολιτικό σας έργο;

31. Does the feedback that you receive from the public via the Internet and social media impact your positions or your political work?

1 2 3 4 5
(ποτέ) (πολύ συχνά)
(never) (very often)

32. Κάνατε αλλαγές στον τρόπο χρήσης των νέων μέσων και των εργαλείων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στις φετινές εκλογές, σε σχέση με την χρήση σας στην προηγούμενη σας εκλογική αναμέτρηση;
1) Ναι / Yes

32. Did you make changes in the way you incorporated social and new media into your campaigning in this year's elections, compared to the previous electoral contest?
2) Όχι / No 3) Not applicable

33. Θεωρείτε πως τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης ήταν επίσημο κομμάτι της προεκλογικής σας καμπάνιας στις φετινές Ευρωεκλογές;
1) Ναι / Yes

33. Do you/did you consider social media to be an official part of your pre-election campaign in this year's European Parliamentary Elections?
2) Όχι / No

34. Θεωρείτε πως το κόμμα σας ενσωμάτωσε περισσότερο τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στις φετινές του προεκλογικές καμπάνιες, σε σχέση με τις εκλογές του 2012;
1) Ναι / Yes

34. Do you believe that your political party more heavily emphasized social media in its campaigning this year, compared to its campaigning prior to the 2012 elections?
2) Όχι / No 3) Δεν ξέρω / I don't know

35. Πόσο σημαντική υπολογίζετε πως θα είναι η συμβολή των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην λειτουργία της πολιτικής στην Ελλάδα τα επόμενα χρόνια;

35. How significant do you anticipate the role of new media and social media will be in the Greek political landscape in the next few years?

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

1 2 3 4 5
(καθόλου) (πάρα πολύ)
(not at all significant) (very significant)

Λ. ΕΡΩΤΗΣΕΙΣ ΓΙΑ ΕΚΠΡΟΣΩΠΟΥΣ ΚΙΝΗΜΑΤΩΝ ΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ - K. QUESTIONS FOR REPRESENTATIVES OF CIVIL SOCIETY/CITIZENS' MOVEMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS

1. Ποια μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης χρησιμοποιεί η οργάνωση/το κίνημα σας;

1) Facebook
2) Twitter
3) YouTube
4) LinkedIn
5) Google+
6) Reddit

1. Which social media tools are used by your organization/movement?

6) pinterest
7) Instagram
8) Μπλόγκ - Blogs
9) Φόρουμ - Forums and message boards
10) Άλλο / Other: _____
11) Κανένα / None

2. Με ποίους τρόπους χρησιμοποιείται τα νέα μέσα και τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης για την επικοινωνία σας με τα μέλη σας και το κοινό;

2. In which way(s) do you use social and new media tools to communicate with your members/volunteers and the public at large?

1) Δημοσίευση ειδήσεων για το κίνημα/την οργάνωση σας / Publicizing news about your movement/organization
2) Δημοσίευση συνεδριάσεων / Publicizing your meetings and events
3) Οργάνωση συνεδριάσεων / Organizing your meetings and events
4) Διεξαγωγή διαδικτυακών συνεδριάσεων ή συζητήσεων / Holding online meetings or chats
5) Σχολιασμός της επικαιρότητας / Commentary on relevant issues
6) Αναδημοσίευση άρθρων και υλικού από άλλες ιστοσελίδες / Republishing news and content from other websites/sources
7) Προσέγγιση νέων μελών ή εθελοντών / Recruiting new members or volunteers
8) Επικοινωνία με το ευρύ κοινό / Communication and interaction with the public
9) Δημοσίευση οπτικοακουστικού υλικού / Posting multimedia: photos, video, audio, podcasts, etc.
donations
10) Άλλο / Other: _____
11) Κανένα από τα παραπάνω / None of the above

3. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την συμβολή των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην ανάπτυξη της οργάνωσης/του κινήματος σας;

3. How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media tools in your organization's/movement's growth and development?

1 2 3 4 5
(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existent) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5
(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

4. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την συμβολή των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης όσον αφορά την απόκτηση νέων μελών/εθελοντών από την οργάνωση/το κίνημα σας;

4. How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media tools for the purposes of recruiting new members or volunteers to your organization or movement?

1 2 3 4 5

(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existent) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

5. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την συμβολή των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην καθημερινή λειτουργία της οργάνωσης/του κινήματος σας;

5. How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media tools in your movement's or organization's day-to-day operations and activities?

1 2 3 4 5

(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existent) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

6. Πως θα αξιολογούσατε την συμβολή των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης όσον αφορά την επικοινωνία σας και την επαφή σας με το ευρύ κοινό;

6. How would you gauge the contribution of new media and social media tools in terms of your ability to interact and communicate with the general public?

1 2 3 4 5

(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existent) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

7. Η οργάνωση ή το κίνημα σας, δημιουργήθηκε μερικώς ή ολικώς μέσα από κάποιο μέσο κοινωνικής δικτύωσης;

7. Was your organization or movement established, in whole or in part, via the social media?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No

Αν ναι, ποιο; / If yes, which? _____

8. Τα μέσα κοινωνικής δικτύωσης σας έχουν βοηθήσει να επικοινωνείτε με άλλες ομάδες πολιτών, άλλα κινήματα, ή άλλες παρόμοιες οργανώσεις;

8. Have social media tools helped your movement/organization communicate with or coordinate action with other citizens' groups, movements or similar organizations?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No

9. Πόσο σημαντική υπολογίζετε πως θα είναι η συμβολή των νέων μέσων και των μέσων κοινωνικής δικτύωσης στην λειτουργία του κινήματος σας/της οργάνωσης σας τα επόμενα χρόνια;

9. How significant do you anticipate the role of new media and social media will be in the operations of your movement or organization in the next few years?

1 2 3 4 5

(ανύπαρκτη) (πολύ σημαντική)
(non-existent) (very significant)

1 2 3 4 5

(πολύ αρνητική) (πολύ θετική)
(very negative) (very positive)

10. Ποια χρονιά ιδρύθηκε η οργάνωση/ομάδα σας;

10. What year was your organization/group established?

_____

11. Η ίδρυση της οργάνωσης/ομάδας σας εμπνεύστηκε από το κίνημα των αγανακτισμένων το 2011;

11. Was the establishment of your organization/group influenced or inspired by the protests of the Indignants in 2011?

1) Ναι / Yes 2) Όχι / No

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